THE TASTE OF HOME: ALCOHOL, IDENTITY, AND HEALTH IN HAWAIʻI'S JAPANESE DIASPORA

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By

Christopher R. Chapman

Thesis Committee:

Eirik Saethre, Chairperson
Christine Yano
Jan Brunson

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an ethnographic account of social identity and health negotiation through alcohol use among Japanese nationals in a Japanese-style pub in Honolulu, Hawai‘i. Currently, over 18,000 Japanese nationals live on Oahu. Compared to the larger population of Japanese-Americans, approximately 300,000, these Japanese nationals constitute a small, invisible diaspora limited by cultural and economic barriers. Japanese-style pubs, in Honolulu, provide a place where identity is mediated through mutual alcohol consumption in close social groups, most notably through interaction via gift exchanges and commodity purchases. However, the effect and course of intoxication is embodied – it is learned through discourse and practice through time and space. The form of alcohol rituals is distinct as it is a reconfiguration of an embodied practice cultivated in Japan, embedded within conflicting structures governing alcohol abuse. Alcohol consumption is a vulnerable, gendered, and contradictory form of health and diasporic identity commodified in a sociocultural microcosm.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION: SEARCHING FOR A JAPANESE DIASPORA IN HAWAI‘I

Introduction

> "You may not really *know* until you get caught - while drinking you don't care, you don't think you will be the one who makes a mistake. But then you are. And you feel really stupid. The process of getting back to where you were is difficult. Life becomes very real." – Masa

Masa once told me that alcohol is healthy for one's mental well-being and that it has a unique place in Japanese culture, that drinking is healthy and can help resolve all of life's problems. However, there is something different happening tonight at the pub. Watching from a small doorway in the kitchen, the early evening rush of traffic flows by under a dusk sky - hundreds of people busy with their lives. The word "Kamō‘ili‘ili", what this Japanese neighborhood used to be called, is spray painted on the side of a local grocery store[1]. A couple strangers sit on a concrete bench, covered by an awning, impatiently awaiting a late bus. Behind the bench, barely hidden from sight, a man down on his luck sleeps tightly curled up. In contrast, activity in the *izakaya*, or Japanese-style pub, which just opened for the night, is quiet. Working in the kitchen with Masa, we both silently prepare food and ingredients for tomorrow's shift. Masa slams a cabinet door and hurls some trash into a garbage bin. Usually upbeat and talkative, he is mute and obviously upset about something. I ask, "How was your night?" "It was ok", he sullenly replies. We don't speak much after that. Later in the night, after the initial wave of food orders, he pours himself a glass of *shochu*, adding a lemon slice and ice cubes. He asks what I want, and I get the same thing. We say cheers and drink. "I got a DUI driving home from work

[1] During my fieldwork over the summer of 2017, I noticed that the grocery store had repainted the building. As a result, the graffiti has been removed. I found only one other piece of street art depicting Mō‘ili‘ili, a large sign on the edge of a construction site. At the time of this writing it had not been removed but will be once construction is complete.

last night", Masa says suddenly. He continues, "It is going to cost me $400 – that is a lot of money!" I ask, "Did you drink more than usual? It is a part of the job, right?" Masa sighs, "Yes but it is stupid how I got caught last night. I don't have that much money. I am lucky I didn't get my license taken away. Next time maybe!" After talking out his story, Masa returned to his usual self, talkative and happy. He continued drinking throughout the night, both on his own volition and through sponsoring customers, getting drunk again.

Alcohol is not a drug. It is a medicine. Who gets to decide? What are the consequences? The effects of a substance on the brain are not universal, they are differentially experienced via the encultured body despite the pharmacological properties. These effects are further moderated by the substance giver, if there is one, and the place it is consumed (Helman 2014:196-197). These components are important in understanding the immediate social situation, where macro processes, in the background, influence the proximate micro-interaction. I opened this chapter with a fieldwork vignette to demonstrate the complexities of alcohol use. Alcohol use is a normal part of social life, work, and health in Japan, embodied through practice, yet, this mundane facet of sociality exists under American laws which frame alcohol abuse as an individualized pathology with serious personal and social consequences. How, then, may we understand how substance use is healthy or not?

This thesis describes social alcohol use in a Japanese pub in the multiethnic context of Hawai'i. My experiences in the field shape the structure of this thesis; each chapter builds on an overall topic of identity and health as mediated across multicultural boundaries. Throughout this thesis I return to overarching themes of transnational identity creation and the construction and transmission of health knowledges. Transnationalism "may be defined as the flow of people, ideas, goods, and capital across national territories that undermines nationality and nationalism"

(Braziel and Mannur 2003:8) Looking at defining diaspora, I take the concept as a community which makes a home away from home, where people "articulate roots and routes to establish these collective homes, by which they construct identity as a means to both strengthen their own solidarity and to gain cultural citizenship in their adopted nations" (Adachi 2006:3) Regarding health, I examine accounts of alcohol use and their relationship to therapy, whereby the ways in which social processes relating to problems are brought into discourse and practice, offering the possibility of resolution and a positive affect (Taussig 1980:7). In this context I see how a transnational community retains ties to its home country, especially as it relates to embodied concepts of health. The actors are Japanese nationals – new, first generation immigrants from Japan living in Honolulu, Hawai'i. The place is an *izakaya*, or Japanese pub, in the historic Japan-town of Mō'ili'ili. I explore notions of health and identity through alcohol from a social and cultural perspective, not a biomedical or public health one. I do not seek to decide who is an alcoholic, or who has a medical problem, but rather highlight the complexities of social, cultural, and economic variables as they influence knowledges of health and harm. This is important in medicine as medical systems are cultural in nature (Kleinman 1980, Good 1994). Similarly, the concepts of use and abuse as used in medical anthropology are also sociocultural constructed, typically viewing alcohol use in a negative lens (Singer 1992, Spicer 1997). I break away from this pattern and develop a greyer picture of substance use. I do not research alcohol abuse directly, but rather examine the social periphery surrounding the potential of substance use to become healthy or deleterious. By not labeling persons as abusers or not, I avoid exoticizing them into an "other" and keep focus on the social and cultural. In this frame, health and identity emerge as a dynamic process tied to experience.

I argue that a Japanese transnational sense of self is embodied through repeated instances of mutually social consciousness modification rituals. Concurrently, dual networks of gift and commodity exchange assist in community identity maintenance. These rituals and exchanges occur in an *izakaya*, where distinct sociocultural forms of alcohol use mediate therapeutic effects among Japanese nationals. These forms, the place of *izakaya,* and its place-making performances are articulated as a unique and traditional aspect of Japan culture, but I posit that they are a byproduct of Japan's modernity and economic change because of globalization and colonization. Ultimately, in this complex transnational process, I show how health is a vulnerable commodity for purchase, stratified by social status and gender, all the while remaining outside of the realm of institutionalized medicine. I begin by framing alcohol as an object of study, its use in Japan, and notions of Japanese identity. I then describe the situations of new Japanese immigrants by briefly covering the history of Japanese in Hawai'i, an important background to my field site and context for understanding how embodied views of alcohol use and identity are reconfigured. I then articulate my position and views as a medical anthropologist. I finish the chapter by explaining my methodology and previewing the entire thesis.

Alcohol in the Gaze of a Medical Anthropologist

Alcohol is a volatile substance in the enmeshment of society and culture. In the United States, an estimated 88,000 people die every year from alcohol-related causes. Alcohol is the third leading preventable cause of death, behind tobacco and diet-related issues (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism 2017). Yet, alcohol is a legal substance and widely consumed by most people in the United States and the world. In 2012, around 3.3 million deaths worldwide were connected to alcohol consumption (World Health Organization 2015). Alcohol

abuse contributes to more than 200 diseases and health problems, like dependence, cancers, and cirrhosis. This is not to discount the more proximal and profound effects alcohol may have on an individual's psychology and social life. In the United States' culture of victimization, alcohol consumption rides along a very thin texture of wrong and right. Public drunkenness, driving while intoxicated, and alcohol-related abuse issues are stigmatized in the public sphere and reflect an individual's lack of will, intelligence, and moral strength. Use of alcohol, labeled a drug, risks interaction with the law and criminal justice system, of which is an institution that severely limits individual agency. This perspective and discourse avoids discussion of the social and cultural, such as to why bars and drinking establishments are located on major roadways, are accessible by vehicle, and how alcohol is safely consumed in varied ethnic, religious, and cultural situations around the world. In this way we see how sociocultural structures, in the United States and Hawai'i, are arranged in a way that allows for intoxicated behavior to harm the self and others.

Yet, arguing that alcohol is only dangerous misses an important aspect of understanding drug and medicine use in various situations. In Japan, alcohol has long been favored as a therapeutic remedy for psychological suffering and sorrow, where a healthy drinking culture is shaped around moderation as a locus of meaning (Shinfuku 2009). This does not discount the existence of social problems of drunk driving and alcohol abuse, however. I problematize conceptions of health that categorize behaviors, practices, and relationships into a binary of good and bad. In approaching alcohol use and abuse as a medical anthropologist, I argue that health is a phenomenon nuanced by social and cultural contexts, configured into practices that are at once both healthy and unhealthy, practices which are dynamic and not static representations. To be holistic and effective, medical anthropology needs to further delineate how substance use is

dynamically affected in these contexts, less it reinforce hegemonic biomedical perspectives on what constitutes a *medicine* and *drug*.

Alcohol use is a well researched topic in medical anthropology, taking up a prominent place in work on substance use (Marshal et al. 2001). While the literature is extensive, there is a trend in framing alcohol negatively (Spicer 1997). I break from this and examine the everyday practices of alcohol use in a public drinking space. There is a difference between heavy drinking and problematic drinking; there are ways in which alcohol use is healthy (Singer 1992). Research shows that moderate alcohol consumption may be healthy as it reduces the chances of developing chronic conditions, particularly heart disease, stroke, and diabetes (Peele 2014). The results are not exactly clear as to the relationship between moderation alcohol consumption and health benefits, however, and will be something addresses in this thesis (Tiger 2007). Health exists as a fluid category that is affected by multiplex social, cultural, and biological variables, conceptions of ill health tying into an individual's social functioning. Healing, risk, and harm exist in a dynamic form across time and space, with influences from the proximal, micro contexts to the distal, macrostructural processes. I build on a small, yet important literature of drinking use and abuse in Japan by situating it in a transnational context (Allison 1992, Borovoy 2005, Christensen 2015, Plath 1964). Generally, the consumption of alcohol is a normal expectation in social occasions, with 'not drinking' seen as strange, rude, or unsocial behavior which is stigmatized in the social sphere. Even further, the conceptualization of alcoholism, or problematic drinking, is unknown to the general Japanese public, and so health problems around alcohol are marginalized and ignored, something present throughout my fieldwork. While this is true, the consumption of alcohol is not always a negative experience.

With this introduction to alcohol and in search of its use in the Japanese immigrant community, I decided to explore Mō‘ili‘ili for one of the more obvious places of social life – places to drink and eat. Mō‘ili‘ili still houses many Japanese businesses, however, they are slowly being pushed out due to a lack of revenue and larger movement to gentrify the neighborhood into a college town. I was fortunate to discover that Mō‘ili‘ili is home to an unusually high number of *izakaya*. Most are owned by Japanese immigrants, others are offshoots of small chain pubs in Japan. During the December of 2016 I visited several *izakaya* to talk with the staff and customers, getting firsthand experience with members of this small transnational population. The first *izakaya* I visited, named Izakaya Iyashikei, is the focus of my research. My introduction to the staff at Izakaya Iyashikei was through alcohol. I approached them, as a stranger and customer, and was able to start a dialog with them through the purchase and consumption of alcohol. Through the course of a few months of regular visits and getting to know the staff, I asked if I could work there for my research, to which they agreed. This point, a fact of interaction being barred by money and consumption of a consciousness modifying substance, plays a significant underlying thread throughout this thesis. Everything, the healing and the risk, the sociality and the loneliness, it all comes down to participation in the neoliberal market economy, where the circulation of money precedes sociality, stratifying interaction and the structure of social relations.

Understanding Japanese Identity and *Izakaya*

1. *Sake* (alcohol) helps dispel depression and sad feelings.
2. *Sake* changes the mood.
3. *Sake* prevents ill health.
4. *Sake* cleans poison from the body.

5. *Sake* extends the lifespan.
   - Excerpt from the *Hyakka Seturin* (One Hundred Teachers Preach), a text from the Edo era (Shinfuku 2009).

To understand how the sociocultural form and meaning of *izakaya* are distinct from other drinking places, and how they invoke a feeling of home and nostalgia by utilizing these and other embodied cultural resources, I review insights into Japanese identity and chart the historical development of *izakaya* in Japan. Many scholars have theorized a Japanese sense of self, an ever-popular topic of interest (Benedict 1946, Lebra 1976, Kondo 1990, Yano 2002, Befu 2009). Building upon this, especially Dorinne Kondo's (1990) theory of Japanese identity creation as a social process, I examine the social interaction within the pub as a motivator and guide in this affective process, with alcohol use as its catalyst and fulcrum. A couple heuristics that are useful for orienting a focus around Japanese culture are *honne* and *tatemae*, or inner thoughts and public face, respectively (Kondo 1991:31) Japan is known as a collectivist society, where people interact in a way to maintain group cohesion, refraining from acting on their own individual desires or feelings. In a broad social and cultural context, then, obligations to the family, to work, and to the nation are paramount and supersede individual goals. Intoxication, interestingly, is a state of consciousness when these two heuristics dissolve, offering the potential for therapeutic response, something important throughout this thesis.

In Japan, notions of the Japanese self are also a popular topic of study, so much in fact, that it has formed into a genre called *nihonjinron*, or theories of Japanese-ness, positing that Japanese culture is unique and deserving of intense study (Befu 2009:25). This literature reflects a Japanese-ness that is exclusive, embodied in Japanese blood, and un-knowledge to non-Japanese people. This is a regular feature of everyday discourse, apparent to outsiders. Often, when non-Japanese speak just a few words of the language in conversation with a Japanese

national, a common reply is "your Japanese is great", an unintentional "othering" of the outsider. Even before my fieldwork began the manager of the pub expressed concern that I would not do well because they use "Japanese" recipes, which would be hard for me to learn. Nonetheless, while *nihonjinron* is informative in broadly understanding patterns of behavior, the literature maintains Japan as an ethnically, linguistically, and culturally homogenous nation, ignoring political economy. In this regard, when understanding how alcohol use connects with identity, history helps show a clear trajectory of the larger, global processes affecting the development of public drinking establishments, like *izakaya*, and the subsequent shaping of identity.

Lingering effects from Japan's shift from a pre-modern, feudal government, hastened modernization, and the multitudinous effects of World War II and the Occupation are still visible in the form and meaning of *izakaya* and alcohol (Alexander 2013, Francks 2009). While Japan has a historically religious connection to alcohol, its consumption as seen in *izakaya*, despite the aesthetic appeals to nostalgia and a "traditional Japan", is a product of Japan's economic change due to opening its borders to the West in 1853-54. Japanese identity negotiation as a social process, then, connects to larger historical-economic processeses.

Alcohol in Japan historically had spiritual significance in the indigenous religion of Shinto (Ohnuki-Tierney 1994:50, Shinfuku 1999:113). *Sake*, or rice wine, was gifted to Shinto gods during celebrations and rituals. People would consume alcohol during public festivals as well. Other than ceremony, *sake* was mainly relegated as a means for nobility and aristocrats to entertain guests (Francks 2009:153-159). In the daily life of the working people, cheap, homemade *sake* called *doburoku* would be consumed in the space of the home. During the Edo (1603-1868) period, when Japan isolated itself from the outside world to avoid colonization, alcohol consumption slowly began to move out of the religious and home realm (home brewing became illegal in 1900)

and into a proto-market economy. Street vendors in growing city centers would sell *amazake*, or sweet rice wine, to passersby. Both the agricultural and manufacturing industries boomed, with foods, *sake*, lacquerware, textiles, pottery, and other products becoming commonplace household goods for the beginning consumer culture. With Japan's borders fully opening up in 1853, German beers and lagers, along with other Western goods, made their way into Edo[2] and other major cities, prompting many small Japanese-owned breweries to open business, a notable few eventually becoming the three dominant Japanese macro breweries[3]. The development of public drinking establishments moves alongside the large-scale modernization from the Edo Era, the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), and throughout World War II and the Occupation (Alexander 2013:17, Franks 2009:152-159). Early forms of *izakaya* in the early 18th century catered to the large population of single men living in cities, serving *sake* in specialized ceramic ware alongside small dishes.

The aesthetic design of Izakaya Iyashikei, particularly the wooden architecture and paper lanterns, are reminiscent of a building in pre-war Japan, just on the cusp of modernization in the late 19th century, as wood was the base material for many buildings and there was little electricity. This aesthetic invokes a feeling of *sabi*, or yearning for the past or of things long old, a quality found in feudal era art (De Bary 1995:43-76). This embodied national nostalgia of a premodern, traditional Japan, of one's old home, is a prominent feature of Japanese society (Creighton 1997, Gluck 1998). The gradual shift from rural to urban lifestyles, of leaving small hometowns to live in cities, reformed social networks as strangers came to live in close quarters, leading to more individualized, isolated experiences. Consumer spending and domestic production increased

[2] Edo is the former name of Tokyo, Japan. Edo was renamed Tokyo with the end of the shogunate in 1868.
[3] The three main breweries are Kirin, Sapporo, and Asahi.

significantly as well as changes in values around alcohol consumption. Luxuries enjoyed by the *samurai* class became everyday practices as incomes rose. Drinking in the morning, a countryside custom for men, became stigmatized while a glass of beer after working hours, also a male activity, became normalized. In Japan's relatively quick and hastened attempt to modernize to avoid colonization, the *samurai* class gave way to the emerging white collar, middle class salaryman and the routine of after-hours drinking rituals (Allison 1992). Places to drink, like beer halls and *izakaya*, became firmly embedded within a growing market economy during the Meiji Restoration. They were enhanced by the World War One economic upsurge and rebuild after World War Two, forming into a place to forge a social identity as alcohol, long seen as a healthy substance, mediated social interaction (Alexander 2013:17, Shinfuku 2009). Even today, they remain a vibrant section of urban Japanese social life, with varying trends in customer base and taste.

Tengoku: Hawai'i as a Land of Paradise

With this understanding of Japanese identity and development of *izakaya*, it is important to detail Japan's intersection with Hawai'i, the place where this embodiment of culture affects and is affected by transnational life. Japan has long had an influence on the society, culture, economics, and politics in Hawai'i (Odo & Sinoto 1985, Wright 2016). In 1853 Japan was forced to open its borders, after nearly two centuries of isolationism, to international trade by Commodore Mathew Perry. In response, Japan began a hastened nation-wide policy of modernization and nationalism to avoid colonization by Western power, eventually forming itself into a colonial power in Asia (Ching 2007). One aspect of Japan's large-scale change was that Japanese citizens could leave the country, something nearly unheard of during the previous 200 years. The rapid industrial buildup and associated urbanization lead to many social changes,

particularly the migration of individuals and families to early urban city centers (Odo & Sinoto 1985). However, there was not enough work to support all the migrants, leading to food shortages across the country.

At the same time, Hawai‘i was in a unique moment of change as over half of its indigenous population had died due to the introduction of diseases from Western colonizers, moving from several hundred-thousand, before the arrival of James Cook, to less than sixty-thousand in 1866 (Odo & Sinoto 1985). Honolulu was a large hub for a bustling whaling industry in the 19th century. However, due to the onset of the American Civil War, many military personnel and resources were diverted from the West to focus on the war effort, severely harming the whaling industry. To keep a thriving economy, Hawai‘i transitioned to large scale sugar plantations as a source of income. With the population levels, however, there was a dire need for laborers. A solution arrived through an agreement between Japan and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i in the form of plantation labor contracts, allowing Japanese citizens to leave the nation to temporarily work in Hawai‘i. On February 8th, 1885, 944 Japanese immigrants, mostly poor farmers, arrived by boat in Honolulu, sponsored by the Japanese government to work as laborers on plantations. Remarkably, no one died on the long journey. The Japanese called Hawai‘i "*Tengoku*", literally meaning 'Land of Heaven', because it symbolized a start of a new life, a life out of poverty and misery for many Japanese families. The reality of these prospects, unfortunately, were far from fortuitous as laborers were treated harshly and had deplorable living conditions (Odo & Sinoto 1985).

The life courses of the first wave of Japanese immigrants, called the *Issei*, to Hawai‘i were already caught in the movements of imperialism and colonialism between Japan, the United States, and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i (Odo & Sinoto 1985). Hawai‘i was transitioning to a market

economy and the *Issei* entered Hawai‘i through a wage-labor structure. Interestingly, Hawai‘i was undergoing colonization, something Meiji Japan was actively trying to avoid (Ching 2007). Japan, in retaliation, was beginning to militarize itself through colonizing Hokkaido, the Ryukyu Islands, or Okinawa, in 1869 and 1879, respectively[4]. The Kingdom of Hawai‘i, caught into American business and state interests, saw its monarchy overthrown in 1893 and its annexation, as Territory, into the United States in 1898 (Odo & Sinoto 1985). The *Issei* were bound by contract to work on plantations but the annexation nullified them, prompting many families to move into Honolulu[5]. Despite these larger political-economic changes, Japanese citizens continued to immigrate to Hawai‘i. Between 1885 and 1894, 30,000 Japanese entered Hawai‘i, and more would continue to come, constituting nearly 40% of the entire population of Hawai‘i in 1912 (Odo & Sinoto 1985).

The *Issei* settled into Honolulu and created small Japanese communities, the most notable being in a neighborhood called Mō‘ili‘ili (Tasaka 2003). This neighborhood was known for its fields of beautiful flowers and subsequent multitude of flower shops[6] (Odo & Sinoto 1985). Additionally, families opened shops selling dry goods and general merchandise, *sake* and alcohol, fish, and many others. Similarly, they set up the first Buddhist mission, Japanese

[4] Imperial Japan would later go on to colonize Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria, holding them until Japan’s surrender in World War II. See Ching (2007).
[5] As in most, if not all, cases of urban growth, the ‘darker’ side of society, as in networks of gambling, prostitution, and illegal substance use, also develops. Some *Issei* became involved in these pursuits which lead to minor, but prevalent stereotype of Japanese among other ethnic groups.
[6] At the time of this writing there are only a few flower shops remaining in Mō‘ili‘ili. Interestingly, one of them, Yamamoto Flowers, is in the same building of another flower shop from the 1930’s. The owners are not the same, of course, but the products are.

language schools, hospitals[7], bath houses, banks, and Japanese-printed newspaper[8]. Culturally, the *Issei* recreated traditions known in Japan, like celebrating the Emperor's birthday, staging *sumo* and baseball matches, and performing *kabuki*. There were unique means of social life as well, like open-air movie showings for the entire community to participate in. In the early 1900's the community of Mō'ili'ili was a self-sufficient Japan-town, the only one in Honolulu[9].

As nationalism gathered in the growing imperial Japan, the *Issei* began to demand equality in working conditions, pay, and legal rights (Odo & Sinoto 1985). Concurrently, anti-Japanese sentiment was beginning to fester, leading to slow legal changes to immigration policy for Japanese nationals, eventually leading to a total immigration ban on all Japanese in 1924, nearly four decades after the first immigrants arrived. This ban would not be lifted until far after World War II and Hawai'i's statehood in 1959, prompting new waves, albeit far smaller, of immigrants. These new immigrants, or *Shin-issei*, are the actors of interest in this thesis.

The 24th Ward of Tokyo

The work of the *Issei* has left a legacy that continues to influence Hawai'i to this day. This legacy consists of multiple structures of society, culture, economics, and politics, ranging from the massive revenue generated by the millions of Japanese tourists every year to the recognition of Japanese holidays and traditions by the public. Also, Hawai'i is the only state in

[7] The *Issei*, recognizing a lack of medical care in their community, created private run Japanese hospitals catering to Japanese people, leading to the first Western-trained Japanese doctors. These hospitals were quite distinct for the time as they were medical institutions created by a diasporic community. Today, only one remains, Kuakini Health System, although it serves the general population. See Okihiro (2002).
[8] The newspaper was called Yamato, which eventually became the Hawaii Times, a publication still in print today.
[9] I found a reference to two other Japan-towns, Palauna and Nuanu, formed the early 1900's, however, they quickly disappeared in the flux of urban development. See Tasaka (2003).

the United States whose demographics are predominantly Asian. I am interested less in the established population of Japanese-Americans than that of new Japanese immigrants. Daily life for a Japanese national in the 21st century Honolulu is rather easy-going, provided an income that supports at least a middle-class lifestyle, which most have. Public transportation is marked with bilingual signs in Japanese, free Japanese-printed magazines advertise the most popular restaurants and real estate agents, and Japanese grocery stores, radio and television programming, all work to insulate Japanese nationals in a 'world of Japan'. Except, they are not in Japan, they are in Hawai'i, a U.S. state near Japan, accessible by a relatively simple flight.[10] In an interview with one of my interlocutors, Isamu, a white collar Japanese national living and working in Honolulu, said that he and his friends all refer to Honolulu as the "24th Ward of Tokyo"[11]. This label perfectly illustrates a segment of this immigrant community. The history of Japanese in Hawai'i and continued flow of Japanese tourists maintains this imagined extension of Tokyo. Many cultural goods and services found in Tokyo are found in Honolulu. In a sense, it is not unrealistic to think of this 24th Ward of Tokyo as a colonial space.

Given the ban on immigration and extreme stigma against Japanese people throughout the time of World War II, the children of the *Issei*, their children, and so on, all U.S. citizens, have grown away from their families' roots in Japan, adopting American values through socialization into an English-speaking, Western way of life. Many second and third generation Japanese refused to learn Japanese, embracing their American identity. My point here is that the current population of Japanese-Americans, generally, are different social actors than new

[10] Flights from Japan to Honolulu range from around $400-$600 depending on the airline and time of year. Considering a domestic trip across Japan may be relatively similar, Hawai'i is easily accessible by most Japanese nationals.
[11] Tokyo, Japan, is a metropolitan prefecture split into 23 independent wards, each essentially functioning like a city.

Japanese nationals immigrating to Hawai‘i. Most attention, public and scholarly, goes towards Japanese-Americans, making the population of Japanese nationals a relatively invisible group in Hawai‘i (Ogawa et al. 1978, Spickard 2009, Adachi 2010, Okamura 2014). The structures of society support this population, and the current sociopolitical gaze is not focused on Japanese ethnic groups, allowing this group to flourish without interruption in and interrupting everyday life. This Japanese diaspora numbers close to 20,000, just on Oahu alone (Igarashi 2014). The new Japanese diaspora is the focus of this ethnography.

The destination of Hawai‘i still carries heavy meaning in everyday discourse in Japan, a meaning of "paradise" and desire for fulfilling a dream of a better life (Tezuka 2015). While this is an exotic view, it is maintained by the millions of dollars brought in through Japanese tourism. Every year, a few hundred Japanese nationals immigrate to Hawai‘i to study and work, the background ideals of an imagined Hawai‘ian paradise influencing the move.

This diaspora, like most, if not all, other Japanese diasporic communities, formed through migrations founded upon endeavors of progress and advancement in a capitalistic economy (Stanlaw 2010). In the Hawai‘i context, this is built upon the tourism industry catering to Japanese visitors. In other words, Japanese nationals living in Hawai‘i are not a forcefully displaced population. They want to be in Honolulu for a reason. In some cases, the underlying economic motivators may not be at the forefront of reasoning, but rather a proxy, as in situations of families immigrating for the father's work, forcing the child to grow up in a different culture. In many ways this economic underpinning is like the motivations of the first wave of immigrants – to make money to live a better life. Hiroki Igarashi (2014) notes that affluent families will send their children (and mothers) to Hawai‘i to provide the child with a prestigious Western education, securing not only a better life course for the child, but a high social status for the

family. Some Japanese nationals arrive to fulfill a work rotation, a common practice for Japanese management positions. Others come under a study abroad program to learn English or to look for a suitable marriage partner[12]. In this thesis all the Japanese nationals I interact with and observe fit into these categories, categories resting on a bed of economic flows that influence every aspect of social and cultural life.

In pinpointing a Japanese diaspora, I focus on Mōʻiliʻili. This neighborhood, one hundred years ago, consisted of the first Japanese immigrants and their close community network. The first point of change in this community in the early 20th was the construction of the H1 highway, which cuts across Mōʻiliʻili, and its subsequent devitalization of human traffic through the area, stagnating the local economy. In the 1950's, Mōʻiliʻili was re-designated as commercial land, a change from agriculture, forcing farmers to sell land for new high-density apartments and condominiums to be built. And now, because of continued change, from World War Two to Hawaiʻi's transformation into an international tourist destination, this community has been broken and scattered. There still is 'a' community of Japanese immigrants, though, however different its form may appear. But the processes that have led to this point continue. In this context of a changing neighborhood, as social relations alter and fluctuate, the culture and health practices of a diasporic community will change too.

Methodology

This thesis is drawn from approximately four months of participant-observation research in a Japanese-style pub in Mōʻiliʻili, many informal conversations, several interviews with key

[12] During my interviews, a few of my interlocutors, who did not know each other, mentioned that it is rather common for Japanese women to move to Hawai'i looking for a foreign husband.

interlocutors, archival work completed at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai‘i, and several visits to other Japanese businesses in the Mō‘ili‘ili neighborhood. Regarding partipant-observation, I worked shifts in the pub about five days a week for about nine hours each. I was trained in both serving and cooking, spending my time equally on the floor with customers and in the kitchen. I primarily communicated in Japanese as the staff are not fluent in English. Initially, as my language skills were at an intermediate level, I had some difficulty in getting used to the flow of work operations but this improved in about a month. My observations are drawn from both staff and customer interactions.

The original focus, which I feel I have kept intact, was a study of patterns of alcohol use in Japanese citizens and its associated health effects, building on the literature by examining alcohol use in a multicultural context. I first decided that I wanted to pursue a study of alcohol use and abuse in the realm of the ‘home’, outside of a clinical setting, drawing from Arthur Kleinman’s (1980) statement that most “illness episodes are treated in the family context” (32). As I discuss throughout the ethnography, Izakaya Iyashikei is a home away from home for immigrants, giving it significant relevance in health negotiations. Second, I decided against quantitative methods, even though I am familiar with them, as I felt they would not be adequate in capturing the discrete and minute aspects of social life and health as would participant observation and interviews. Similarly, I made my interview questions somewhat open ended as I attempted to stimulate a natural discussion about my interlocutor’s lives.

The nature of this thesis brings a question of my own participation with alcohol. Here I make note of my own consumption of alcohol ‘in the field’. There are several reasons why I felt it important to engage with my interlocutors in drinking alcohol. My primary field site is a Japanese pub and so, as I have stated previously, there is an expectation to drink alcohol. In fact,

I was required to drink alcohol on shift while working at Izakaya Iyashikei. I never drank to excess, however. Of course, when it comes down to a hard decision I did have the option to not drink, but, in most cases, I felt drinking was necessary and beneficial towards my own social position in the group. As I will discuss in the main ethnography, the experience of intoxication, its phenomenological effects, is a learned state. While I may never be able to truly comprehend the complex embodied feelings of health and identity found in alcohol as described by my interlocutors, I felt that 'trying' to engage in the various drinking narratives was fruitful in helping me orient my research focus through direct experience. Also, falling back onto an understanding, albeit general, of Japanese culture, alcohol was a useful bridge into discussing the rather intimate topics of my research with my interlocutors in the *izakaya* setting. While I do not disagree with an ethical principle of not obtaining knowledge from people while they are in altered states of consciousness, we must remember that this view is being articulated from a Western, arguably American standpoint, inherently containing biases about the effects and social courses of substances. For my interlocutors with a strong embodied sense of Japanese society and culture, the state of drunkenness *is* the time to discuss personal, intimate feelings, and the Japanese pub *is* the place to discuss such matters. It makes sense, then, that if I want to move beyond the outer cultural 'wall' I need to engage with my research participants on a medium which is comfortable to them. I ensured my interlocutors were aware of my research, reminding them that their participation was voluntary and discretionary.

Approaching a more general sense of my position in the *izakaya*, there is no doubt that my appearance, a tall white male with blonde hair, affected people's behavior around me. The effects are not, I felt, significant though, as many of my observations and encounters mirror those found in the anthropological literature. I was placed near the bottom of the social hierarchy,

naturally, which afforded me a great opportunity for learning. In some cases, the sense of naivety and ignorance I could adopt served me well as I had seemingly simple, common sense things explained to me. Common sense, really, is just culture.

Another aspect of my position that I feel I must point out is that I am a student of the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa. In Chapter Five I discuss how this university, specifically the administration’s economic interests in turning Mō‘ili‘ili into a mini-college town through the construction of an apartment complex, are slowly pushing away the Japanese businesses that were once the mainstay of the neighborhood. As I discuss a possible larger trajectory of sociocultural change in this community, with the University of Hawai‘i as a motivator, that makes me, in a perspective, an agent of that change. If someday Izakaya Iyashikei closes, it is likely the cause would be sustained urban re-development. In this case, my thesis is little more than salvage ethnography, relegating this little segment of life and health to the history shelves.

I do not lose heart, however, given these multiple interpretations and complications of my position in my research. In writing this ethnography I found inspiration by Arthur Kleinman’s (1997) introduction to *Writing at the Margins,* where he discusses his position on the margins of different ‘worlds’, and how his writing attempts to bring that marginality, or sense of ‘on the border’ to writing. I am in one sense an ‘in-training-social scientist’, while in another an in-training-kitchen cook/bartender. Both are two different worlds with different currents of knowledge and discourse. I have attempted my best effort to bridge these two worlds, and of course many others, in this ethnography. I have included excerpts and quotes from my field notes and interviews to represent my research participant’s voices. At times I have chosen a more passive, distanced voice in my writing to focus on my interlocutors in the immediate situation, not me. It should be clear that I understand my limited place in this research and it should be

clear to the reader that my engagement in these worlds is bounded to small, short social situations which offered a certain perspective at a certain time. This thesis, as research, is restricted by what I observed and what people decided what to share with me, or even, given the many cultural lacunae, were able to share given what they 'knew' in the moment. Even further, the way in which I organize this thesis is another adjustment in which the style, formatting, and length[13] excluded the full amount of ethnographic data and analysis I wished to include. Any reader should understand that any faults in this work are mine alone.

Outline of the Thesis

This ethnography began with a brief introduction to the project, a history of the Japanese arrival to Hawai'i, my arrival to the field site, and a discussion of my position as a researcher in a Japanese pub and as a representative of a large institution with economic interests. The main body of text will consist of four chapters which draw from my field notes, interviews, informal conversations, and archival work. Much of the observations and dialogue are of and in social situations and chains of social interactions, occurring in a Japanese pub. I infer an understanding of a community and health from these data, not unlike Max Gluckman's (1958) case studies. I organize this thesis through an understanding that culture and health are constituted through social relations, relations which are historically influenced and continually renegotiated through interaction. That is, cultures are the rules governing the ways in which individuals interact socially, as epiphenomenal to social structure, as continually negotiated meanings actualized within social relations, therefore conceptualizing culture as a constant dynamic altering with change in social structure, with change being adaptive (Gluckman 1958, Kleinman 1997:58,

[13] I refer to the shorter length appropriate for the master's thesis, not a doctoral dissertation, roughly around 100 pages.

Radcliffe-Brown 1940, 1965). To approach the underlying health influencing variables, I begin with documenting the social before engaging with interpretations of alcohol and health. Overall, I attempt to mirror my experience of fieldwork through the organization of chapters. The social interaction within the *izakaya* and neighborhood is the most immediately visible. Then, with more focus, I see how this sociality is mediated through the exchange of objects, especially alcohol, through distinct forms of ritual. Moving from the social to the individual, I explore life histories to understand the embodied culture at work, coupled with the social context, to illustrate the interpretations of the relations between alcohol, identity, and health. With these meanings articulated, I offer an anthropological analysis of the various modalities of health. This analysis is my goal in this thesis, a goal I feel must be contextualized in sociocultural and political economic contexts.

Chapter Two will take the reader to the primary field site of Izakaya Iyashikei and layout its social organization. In exploring this I detail internal social hierarchies, patterns of behavior, gendering behavior, and the social place-making process. The staff consists of full-time, working class, undereducated Japanese transnational men and part-time, college educated Japanese women. The process of drinking at the Japanese pub is structured from start to finish, offering a familiar and expected experience. The performances behind this process are built upon rote learning, wherein actions and rituals are repeated until perfection. This process of learning through repetition, or kata, is a common pedagogical tool across Japan. The full-time staff performatively establish themselves as heterosexual men through marked discursive behaviors, like a secret vocabulary known among the staff and deployed to discuss women's bodies. From the perspective of dramaturgy, bodily and discursive behaviors come together to form a distinct

stage-making process which mediates identity and health negotiation among the customers and staff.

Chapter Three will further explore social ties through discussing the commodification of a religious ritual form. This chapter brings the lens of analysis a little closer to specific social groups and actors in Izakaya Iyashikei. Specifically, I cover ritual and material exchange and the nuances of true gift giving and masquerading commodity purchases as a base of social networks. In this section I focus on alcohol as an object in these networks. The process of drinking in the *izakaya* is structured and exists as a form of ritual as it is different among different customers. Alcohol bottles become a site of identity mediation as experiences become materialized as drawings and notes on the bottle. Outside of the bottle as an object of interest are networks of exchange. First, there are gift exchanges between regular transnational customers, who frequently travel to Japan, and the staff. This common cultural convention in Japan exists in the pub, however the staff repay the inflicted debt by gifting alcohol. Second, there are exchanges between the staff and other local businesses, such as food for food. While at the front of activity is a locus of true gift exchange, in the Maussian sense, the underlying commodification of alcohol and money exchanges preceding the gift exchanges gives a double meaning to the sociality. Building on exchange theory, I argue that an exchange is not best framed as a gift exchange or not, but rather that multiple types of exchanges may exist in the multiple layers of social structure. Meanings attached to objects are formed from the relationships they are tied to and a commodity may doubly act as a gift depending on the social connection.

Chapter Four turns attention further inward, looking at the individual lives of my interlocutors, particularly Aki, Keiko, and Masa. This chapter brings the reader into a discussion of health, knowledge, and the complexities surrounding practice. I portray the varied meanings

of health and risk through gleaning together narratives found in life history interviews, follow-up dialogue, and in-the-field observations. I build on these narratives and social relations by examining the ways in which alcohol, subjectivity, and health relate to one another through specific healing rituals, the creation of a therapeutic narrative, a foundation of lacunae around alcohol and its effects, place and affective healing, and the normalization of pain and soreness. Overall, I demonstrate that positive health outcomes are stratified by social position and that negative health experiences somaticize among the working class staff. Just as drinking became commodified, its tacit meanings of health also are commodified and accessible by those with the necessary social, cultural, and economic capital.

Chapter Five, the conclusion, summarizes the thesis by galvanizing the themes of transnationalism, identity, place, political economy, and health as a product of a certain time and place, transient and certain to change as Mō‘ili‘ili gentrifies. I demonstrate health as a vulnerable commodity with the closure of another *izakaya* and the future aspirations of my interlocutors. Mō‘ili‘ili is a precarious space for Japanese businesses, especially Japanese-style drinking places which form a locus of urban Japanese transnational community. Overall, I offer that a full understanding of how substance use becomes harmful or healing is best achieved by describing how history and social change impacts current modalities of use, and how substances incorporate and are incorporated by the people who use them. Theorizing a synthesis between subjective accounts and political economy, linking microphenomena to macrostructure, achieves this task.

CHAPTER TWO
SOCIAL INTERACTION, GENDER, AND PLACE-MAKING

Introduction

> "I think *izakaya* are an essential part of Japanese culture. If you really want to understand someone, take them to an *izakaya*." – Aki

In this chapter I detail the social hierarchy and explore three modes of new Japanese immigrant sociality. Before analyzing the mediation processes of identity and health in the pub, it is important to explore the social relationships within Izakaya Iyashikei as it scaffolds an understanding of the culture of this piece of a small diasporic community. First, I analyze the performed, patterned behaviors by the staff and the creation of a stage which embeds customers in identity work through interpersonal interaction. Second, I describe masculine performativity among the staff, looking at behavioral and discursive cues, giving special attention to a 'secret' vocabulary deployed to not only control flows of knowledge between server and customer in an extremely small physical space, but also tacitly demonstrate masculinity and in-group solidarity, adding another layer of relations in this micro-constellation of social life. Before concluding I elaborate on the themes of performativity and look at Izakaya Iyashikei from the theories of place, a constructed point of diasporic social life for new Japanese immigrants trying to make a living in Honolulu.

Izakaya Iyashikei[14] is one of several Japanese-style pubs in the Mō'ili'ili neighborhood. Located next to a major roadway and parking lot, it is relatively easy to access by car, public transit, and foot. The business' appearance is quite mundane and without a meticulous gaze is easy to miss amidst its neighboring suites. Two large windows guard a single door, the glass framed by

[14] *Iyashikei* (癒し系) means therapy, healing, rejuvenating, or soothing. As I see this *izakaya* as an avenue of community and healing for new Japanese diasporees, I chose to use Izakaya Iyashikei as a pseudonym for my main field site.

thin, vertical mahogany bars of wood. This design creates an effective wall that is difficult to see through, particularly during daylight hours. During business hours two large *noren*[15], or curtains, boldly displaying the name "Izakaya Iyashikei" wave in the air in front of the windows. Despite the relative simplicity of its design, the small pub attracts a large crowd of customers on most nights. It is not uncommon to see a line of people standing outside waiting for a seat, especially on the weekend night. In this excerpt from my field notes, the sounds of vibrant social life command a noticeable aspect of attention in the neighborhood surrounding the *izakaya*. Izakaya Iyashikei is a regular destination for new Japanese immigrants, or local people as the staff put it[16], and Japanese tourists, although much of their customer base consists of the former. In fact, throughout my fieldwork I befriended many of the regular customers, most from Japan and living in Honolulu. In total, at the time of this writing, there are about sixteen Japanese-style pubs and drinking establishments in the Mōʻiliʻili neighborhood, significantly more than any other residential neighborhood.

Izakaya Iyashikei, like most others in the area, caters their business to residents, specifically local Japanese, or Japanese immigrant living in Honolulu[17]. Regarding demographics, on average about 70 customers visit every night, with weekends bringing in up to 100. In this figure, approximately 65% are Japanese nationals, with about a 60/40 split of men and women, respectively. The age range is wide, as customers are between 18-60 with most being in their late

[15] *Noren* (暖簾) curtains are standard objects used to brand a business' name. Most *izakaya* and other Japanese-style drinking and eating establishments use *noren*.

[16] Here I refer to a conversation Yusuke and I had about the customer base. He, and the rest of the staff, designate non-Japanese citizens who live in Hawai'i as 'local'. This word has a contentious meaning among different social groups in Hawai'i but here I wish to use the interpretation provided by my interlocutors.

[17] Also drawing from my conversation with Yusuke, local Japanese refers to a person of Japanese ethnicity, usually a citizen, who is living either temporarily or permanently in Hawai'i. This category doesn't necessarily exclude the varied generations of Japanese-Americans but the staff is aware of stark sociocultural differences, particularly in language ability.

twenties or early thirties. Nearly all customers come in groups, with men attending in mixed gender groups and women with other women. There was also a relatively wide range in people's length of stay in Honolulu, ranging from a few months to several years. The regular customers, however, have resided in Honolulu for at least two to three years. In this sense, it seems to me, Mō'ili'ili still plays an active part in the daily life of many members of the Honolulu Japanese diaspora. Izakaya Iyashikei is a regular destination for new Japanese diasporees to establish a social identity, negotiating through mutual alcohol consumption and discourse. The fulcrum to this social life and microcosm of culture is the staff, whom are also new Japanese diasporees.

Staff Hierarchy

In this section I provide an overview the staff heirachy of Izakaya Iyashikei to show how embodied Japanese culture, as learned in Japan, influences the social relationships among the staff and surrouding neighborhood This embodiment of Japan is an antededant, but not total determinant, of the formation of culture and health in the pub. Further, given the immigration of staff from Japan to Honolulu, I show that business interests underlie the formation of Japanese immigrant communities.

Izakaya Iyashikei is incorporated in Hawai'i under the name Japan Food, Inc., which is wholly owned by Japan Food Tokyo, a purveyor of a chain of similarly named *izakaya* around the Tokyo metropolitan area. When planning to expand their business into the Honolulu market in the early 2000's, their president envisioned an *izakaya* that served the local population, not Japanese tourists. With the help from a business planning agency, Mō'ili'ili was designated as the best place to find Japanese living in Honolulu. In 2010 Izakaya Iyashikei opened for business and since then has maintained a steady, if small, stream of profit. At the time of my fieldwork

Izakaya Iyashikei had four full time, salaried workers and three part-time, hourly workers, not including me. Interestingly, the full-time staff were all men while the three part-timers were women. While I was there, one part-time worker quit to pursue a career as a hair stylist, and I had heard stories of two other new hires quitting on their first day due to excessive work stress. The entire staff consisted of new Japanese diasporees, each with a unique backstory as to their arrival in Hawai'i. Most have less than a high school education and limited competency in English[18].

The staff hierarchy is organized in a linear fashion, each staff member securing their place by their job function and seniority, creating a pyramid of status and power. Management occupies the top, full time workers the middle, and part time workers are placed in the bottom. The full-time staff begins work at 2:00PM, usually with food preparation and daily cleaning chores. The *izakaya* opens for business at 5:30PM and closes at 2:00AM. Part time employees begin their shifts at 5:30 as well, working until closing duties are finished. On most nights closing is finished around 2:30. While the full-time staff works the entire 12 hour shift, they all take a 30 minute nap every day from 5:00 to 5:25. The *izakaya* is open every day of the week and only closes for holidays or special events, like the yearly company sponsored staff vacation.

Job duties in the *izakaya* revolve around four roles, the server, the front station, back station cook, and back station washer. As such each shift consists of four employees, one of whom is usually a part timer. The server is responsible for interacting with customers to take orders, deliver orders, and address any questions and concerns. Most of the time the server is female because, as it was explained to me, it attracts more customers. During my shifts I either

[18] Japan Food Tokyo doesn't sponsor any language training or relocation packages so the foreign staff's level of English competency is rather low.

worked as a server or in the kitchen, in which case the manager would take over server duties. The primary function of the part timers is to provide a day off for the full-time staff. In the case of schedule conflicts or understaffing all four full time staff will work continually without any days off. The front station is behind the bar and is responsible for preparing cold-based food orders and drinks while handling customers who are sitting at the counter. The back station cook and washer are in the kitchen and are responsible for preparing all hot dishes, restocking food items, and primary cleaning duties.

In Japanese society, interpersonal and formal social networks, usually within education and work, are governed by a cultural hierarchical system called *jougen kankei*, or vertical relationship (De Bary 1995, Kawano et al. 2014, Yano 2002:50-53)[19]. In this relationship one person is senior, called *senpai*, while the other is junior, called *kohai*. Each role has a clear set of proscriptions and prescriptions: a *kohai* is obliged to follow the instructions of the *senpai* without question, deferring to their senior as a mentor. A *senpai*, then, is responsible for guiding and protecting the kohai so that they mature into a competent and civil member of the group. Linguistic and behavioral cues demarcate an individual's position in the relationship, as in a *kohei's* use of honorifics and bows.

In Izakaya Iyashikei, *jougen kankei* is visible and mirrors the chain of command. Whenever an employee has a question or problem they will defer to a superior. Even in relatively simple matters, like where to sit a group of customers or how to order alcohol from a vendor, a superior's advice will be requested. I witnessed several occasions where one of the full time staff would complete a task if alone, but if in the immediate vicinity of a *senpai*, would politely ask

[19] In addition to the academic literature on *jougen kankei*, Masa explained the dyadic structure and role expectations to me. Although I was never explicitly taught it, I was expected to act in the role of *kohai*. There were several times where I broke my role's rules, usually by forgetting an honorific, and was corrected.

for their opinion. The role of *kohai*, then, supposes a constant state of learning where the *senpai* is the source of knowledge. It seems it most cases though that the continued role maintenance is less about knowledge acquisition and more a channel of perpetuating the social structure.

Despite the seemingly strictness of the *jougen kankei*, the overall bond between the staff is best characterized as personal, playful, and supportive, taking on sibling-like qualities. Every day they find some general topic, like a recent Japanese baseball team's victory or Yusuke's, the manager, attempts to find a girlfriend, to banter about. In a contrasting balance, work tasks are taken seriously and help is available whenever needed. These embodied ways of being in the world are actualized through a small, inclusive fictive kinship network, an aspect of social relations molded through larger, marginalizing social and economic structure.

Patterns of Behavior

Sitting on a small padded wooden stool inside the *izakaya*, I was amazed how cramped the pub is. Walking in from the front door, five tables reside in the west section while in the east a large stained wooden slab acts as a bar, a wall of assorted *sake* and *shochu* forming a wall between Sho, the bartender tonight, and the customers. Behind him various plates and bowls are stacked among many rows of shelves. At the top are an assortment of *shochu* bottles, each with the name of a customer, waiting for their return. The pub can sit around 20 people, and even before that they sit shoulder to shoulder, back to back. Keiko hurriedly, yet smoothly makes her way between tables, stretching to deliver a drink, bending backwards to slip between two men returning from the bathroom as she returns to the kitchen. The *izakaya* has a traditional Japanese aesthetic; the walls and ceiling are lined by intersecting and parallel bands of darkened wood, giving the impression the room is supported by it. Japanese beer advertisements depicting white bikini

models line the wall, a typical *izakaya* feature. The lights are dim, creating an amber, twilight ambience. A few lanterns, glowing orange, gently sway from the ceiling. A wild flame catches the eye as Masa, visible from the counter, grills some meat in the kitchen. A catchy Japanese folk song plays lightly over the speaker system, the singer praising the effects of beer and getting drunk. Most of the seats are filled tonight, groups of people chatting in Japanese and laughing over alcohol and greasy, salty food. Nobody here is alone.

In examining social interaction in the *izakaya*, then, I find that the experience of being a customer, from the moment of walking in until leaving, is structured in very specific ways. Here I detail this structuring and how it acts as an entry point into a microcosm of transnational Japanese culture of Izakaya Iyashikei. Not unlike the intragroup bonds between the staff, the relationship between customer and the staff is intimate, playful, and trusting. Regular customers and the staff readily discuss matters of work, sex, money, and politics with each other, just as if they were longtime friends. Most topics of a personal nature are discussed while intoxicated, an aspect of social identity I will discuss further in Chapter Four. Even for new or infrequent customers the staff will be exceedingly friendly and close, quick to establish the normalcy of the intimate knowledge sharing. The relationships carry into life outside the *izakaya* as well. It is not uncommon to see an employee drinking with a regular customer, either at this *izakaya* or another one in the neighborhood.

The first and most apparent sign is the loudness of the *izakaya*. The entire staff attentively monitors the status of a customer, marking entry and departure by energetically yelling "welcome", "see you in a bit (when a customer steps outside)", "welcome back/home", and "thank you for visiting us"[20]. A customer being seated is also announced, to which the rest of the staff welcomes

[20] I did not include the Japanese words in this sentence for clarity. The words are, corresponding to the list above, *irasshaimase*, *itterasshai*, *okaerinasai*, and *arigatougozaimasu*.

again. Likewise every order is announced, to which the staff thank. Seating at tables, meant for parties of three or more, is arranged so that customers face each other. Seats at the counter face the front station server, who is eager to chat and take orders. Bodies are purposefully oriented towards either each other to stimulate sociality. Also, importantly, is the placement of unopened bottles of Japanese *sake* and *shochu* between the server and customers, ironically framing alcohol as the hinge to communication.

An *izakaya* is a primarily a place to talk and drink alcohol. Food is important, but plays a secondary role as all food items are relatively small and shareable amongst a group of people. A server will always try to take a drink order first and a food order after drinks have been delivered. Food is usually ordered in large batches and delivered in a particular way over the course of an hour. Grilled meats and fried food come first, followed by a rice based dish, ending with a light snack like salted edamame. Yusuke, during one of our shifts, explained to me the importance of passively monitoring the customers to make sure drinks are always filled and that meals are coming out at regular intervals. Further, as Yusuke explained, this is the expectation Japanese people have when they come to an *izakaya* so it must be followed. Non-Japanese people do not understand this cultural aspect and so, at least for the staff, it is less important to worry about structuring the meals and drink checks.

Kata, a concept developed by Christine Yano in her studies of *enka*, a popular type of traditional Japanese ballad, is a useful heuristic to analyze the structuring of Japanese behavior and interaction in *izakaya*. Kata, or patterned form, refers to the enculturated forms of movement and action that are learned through repetitive movements (Yano 2002:24-27). This concept builds on notions of procedural memory to situate the processes of embodying culture by "emphasizing the embeddedness of daily patterns, detail, knowledge, technique, codification, and repetition" (Yano

2002:25). Kata highlights the inherent beauty in the form of the act and the surrounding effects staged to draw attention to the performer. The servers become a part of the lived experience the customer engages with, creating a methodological way of being in the world and bringing customers into that world. The twilight world of a wooden building interior, lanterns swinging in a breeze as shadows darken the faces of strangers, wraps the performances of the staff into a presentation supplementary to the interpersonal discourses mediated by alcohol consumption.

An essential aspect of kata, and pedagogy in Japanese arts, is its role in passing on the forms of performance to untrained individuals (O'Neil 1984:636, Yano 2002). My training involved very little overt instruction. Instead, it focused on 'doing' things, repeating simple tasks like wiping off a knife after every stroke, adding 'just enough' soy sauce to a dish of stir fry, setting chopsticks in a certain position in front of customers, drinking from a shot glass while holding it between my thumb and pinky[21], and articulating Japanese phrases in a particular, animated way. Even if I did something correct, I would be continually reminded that my effort was 'too much' or 'too little', requiring me to practice again. The language training was one of the stranger behaviors I became accustomed to; shouting out the customary entrance and departure expressions with a not too loud but still quite energetic voice. Within two weeks of continued behavior coaching and practice, I was surprised to find working a far simpler task than it had been in the beginning. Every expectation of my role set became embodied and distant from my conscious mind as I worked. The repetition, particularly with the yelling, was so intense that I found myself unable to sleep after the shift was over as the words and phrases would race through my head. Kata as a method of patterned learning is an effective method of socialization into the *izakaya* culture.

[21] This is something that I have only seen the Izakaya Iyashikei staff do. They articulate their presence in Hawai'i by making a shaka, a sign of surf culture.

Server and staff performances are perfected by practice, and the stage in which social life is performed is finely maintained[22]. The performances of the staff and interactions with customers negotiates the creation of social identities and controls the consolidation and stratification of social ties. Although the staff work to make all interactions intimate, they are only truly effective with Japanese citizens[23]. Further, as I will discuss in Chapter Four, the contextualized feelings of leisure and intimacy as created in this micro-encounter embed the phenomenological experience of distorted perception and feeling that accompanies intoxication.

Masculine Performativity

On a busy Friday night I helped Masa serve customers their drinks and food. A couple just left and another had just arrived to take their place. This new couple, a young Japanese woman and her husband, were greeted by all of us with a loud "*irasshaimase*!" – a general word for "welcome" used in Japanese shops and restaurants. As Masa pulled chairs out for the couple, the wife sat first, the husband second. After making the second announcement that two customers with a reservation had been seated, we all repeated a loud "*irasshaimase*". Masa, turning away towards Sho at the front bar yet still within earshot of several customers, casually said "*kaka ga arimasu*"[24]. Sho didn't respond but quickly glanced at the new female customer. Yusuke glanced back from the kitchen to peek at the customer as well. Safely in the kitchen, I asked Masa "what does "*kaka*" mean?" "It is our secret word for "big boobs" he replied."

[22] During my training Yusuke informed me that the bathrooms are one of the essential aspects of the customer experience and must be kept clean at all times. The bathrooms, then, are also a part of stage making. Bidets are common in Japan and both toilets in Izakaya Iyashikei are equipped with them, providing an interestingly sense of familiarity.
[23] Here I emphasize the importance of Japanese language ability and recognition of meanings as embodied in the lifeworld of an individual with experience living in Japan.
[24] *Arimasu* is a verb which means 'to have'. Here I use a pseudonym '*kaka*' to conceal the actual word.

The map I have been attempting to construct of social interaction inside Izakaya Iyashikei gets another layer of grouping as the staff themselves constitute a unique microcosm of culture, of which I began to discuss earlier in this chapter. Through differential deployment of language the staff expresses and negotiates gender. I utilize a sense of performativity as shown by Don Kulick (2003), where enunciation of words in social situations works to engender said situations in a particular way. Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity is another useful concept, where gender "is not a stable fact but something we create" (Butler 1990). In this section I pick apart the ways in which the staff use language to create themselves as an exclusive, gendered group.

First, I focus on the energetic yells of welcoming and thanking customers. The pronunciation of the exact words as spoken by the male staff is differentiated and, I argue, a public performative of masculinity and display of group exclusivity to customers. The male staff will alter the phrase "*irrashaimase*", shortening it to "*irasshai", "irashe"* or even just a loud "*se*". Additionally, they lower their voice a considerable degree, far lower than their normal conversation level of tone. This way of speaking is extended to every other phrase spoken loudly, from "order ready" to "thank you very much". Masa explained that not all *izakaya* do this, but the ones that want to let their customers know that they have a "personality" will do this, really being another sign of a good, authentic Japanese *izakaya*.

Further, through the deployment of a Japanese vocabulary set only known to them, the staff performatively create themselves as a distinctly masculine social group. I was afforded the opportunity to learn some of the vocabulary, marking an important point in my training and inclusion into the group. The secret words, created by the male staff, are only taught to

employees they feel they can trust[25]. Even more impressive is that each of the Japan-based Izakaya Iyashikei have their own distinct vocabulary sets. According to Masa, most *izakaya* in Japan have their own quirks and peculiarities. When I first mentioned I wanted to discuss them in my thesis, Yusuke balked and sternly said "absolutely not". Only after I reassured him that I would not use the actual words verbatim in my text did he agree. As such the words and phrases I recreate here are not the real ones. In the excerpt above, I show how the full time staff, all men, are able to discuss a woman's body's feature in close proximity without her knowledge. Usually the conversation will continue on as staff members pass each other in the kitchen, commenting on various bodily features and comparing them to other women they know. Sometimes even the male staff will take turns rotating between server duties in order to observe a woman's body up close to make their own opinion. In thoroughly discussing a female's body, then, the full time staff establish themselves as heterosexual men. Even further, they create themselves as heterosexual Izakaya Iyashikei staff, the most inner circle of social groupings in the *izakaya*. In discourse, though, as women become symbols from which a masculinity is performed, the woman being discussed is never let known[26], even if it is a regular, well-established customer, marking a similarity but contrast to Anne Allison's observations of salarymen openly discussing hostess' bodies in front of them (Allison 1992:42-56). Still, however, the imaginary of desire, heterosexuality, and control as constructed through dialogue serves a powerful medium in continually molding the inclusive social identity of the men. An interesting dynamic in this, though, is that the part-time staff, Keiko, Erina, and Mari, know the secret vocabulary, but do not

[25] Even after the end of my fieldwork I did not know all the secret vocabulary, which I understand to be a marking of my status within the group.

[26] There was one instance where Yusuke made a mistake talking to a female customer and implied a sexual innuendo, causing her to become confused and embarrassed. Upon quickly returning to the kitchen, he became hysterical with laughter at his mistake. It appeared to me that even a mishap with the secret vocabulary does not result in serious consequences.

usually actively participate in the discussion of female bodies. In my observations and discussions they seem to accept that this small aspect of banter between the men is just that - banter to "help them feel better about themselves". On rare occasions the female staff would become the object of a discussion, in which they would quickly retort a derogatory comment about the bodies of the men. These exchanges were never serious, in a sense, but rather playful and joking.

The secret vocabulary is also used in banter between the staff, offering a way to cope with work stress while still maintaining in-group exclusivity. One night, Yusuke hurries out of the kitchen with a plate of hot food. He just gave an order for ice cream, to which Masa discovers most of the food stored in the freezer has somewhat defrosted. Apparently the freezer is old and takes a long time to achieve its set temperature. In his immediate business, Yusuke had left the freezer door open several times throughout the night, causing it to warm up past freezing. Masa shows Sho, Yudai, and I, muttering '*dogoshi*'. Both Sho and Yudai chuckle and nod in agreement.

The channel of intragroup discursive behavior also sees the use of other staff members' behavior as a basis of joking criticism. '*Dogoshi*' is a complicated meaning condensed into one word. Its best translation could be a derogatory "you made a mistake and it is all your fault". So as a jest to his supervisor, Masa discovered Yusuke's mistake and blamed it on him. By sharing the jest with the others through this medium, then, Masa not only performs as a member of the inner circle, but also publicly criticizes his superior. The bonds between the staff are friendly, playful, and supportive, yet that is not say any relationship is without conflict. Working in an extremely confined environment where bodies come into contact on a near constant basis, most days of the week for over 10 hours, is liable to lead to individualized annoyances and irritations.

It may be that "*dogoshi*" when deployed creates the speaker and in-group listeners as members of the inner circle, eroding the seriousness of the vertical relationship structure and providing a brief respite from the constant pressure of work. A minor aspect of competitiveness and combativeness also flows through this discourse, and it is common to hear each staff member, even the part timers, point out each other's mistakes all night.

As a final demonstration of the masculine performativty embedded within the staff's social relations, group solidarity is maintained through an illusion of gender equality. Keiko, as a woman, shows an interesting angle to gender performativity by saying that "Yusuke and the others (the male staff) all think of me as a guy. They treat me as if I were a guy. Maybe it has to do with the way I behave and talk while at work". While this statement is accurate, Keiko only works as a server to a customer base consisting of more men than women, wherein Keiko has encountered numerous instances of sexual harrasment. As may be imagined, tips are always higher on nights when the female staff work, securing their continued place in that role. Given the active and dynamic substance of Butler's concept of gender, then, we may see how Keiko situates herself in a power relationship which latently reinforces gendered divisions of labor.

In discussing the aspects of the staff's interactions we see it not as an equal group but an assembly whose members behave on a differential basis. Besides gender differences, information is shared on an unequal basis despite the staff hierarchy. While the vertical relationship is critiqued and sometimes unobservable from watching the staff's behavior, it does exist, even if not actively. Information about the *izakaya* operations, for instance, is known hierarchically based on achieved status, i.e., management, but sometimes not shared in an egalitarian manner. When Mari gave her two-week notice, only Yusuke and Sho knew about it and decided to not inform the rest of the staff. And on a Sunday evening Mari let us know that it would be her last

day, much to Masa and Yudai's surprise and annoyance. This neglect of information sharing extends to job advancement in the pub. Masa, despite being employed at Izakaya Iyashikei for several years, has not been shown how to complete management level tasks like managing inventory levels or scheduling shifts. Short on staff, Yusuke and Mutsuki hired Sho two years ago, who flew from Japan to work in Honolulu in a management position with less experience than Masa, much to his chagrin.

Overall, the staff constitutes a social group within the larger community of the *izakaya*, and yet even within it there are complex structures of power articulating the ways in which the group behaves, and ultimately, identifies itself. The predominately male staff create and maintain themselves as an exclusive, heterosexual, and masculine group through discourse and interaction, masking other expressions of gender with a narrative of equality while forming gendered divisions. Even among the men there are differences in position and power which maintain supervisor-subordinate relations. The gender performance's embeddment in place-specific discourse and embodied Japanese identity fundamentally establishes it as a product of economic globalization and historical migrations between Japan and Honolulu.

A Home away from Home

> "When a person arrives here from Japan they are not alone. They know someone at school or work that takes them to an *izakaya* or *yakitori* restaurant to drink and get to know each other. A lot of Japanese here, if not most, know each other. Coming to a place like this is how a community forms." - Masa

Now I will turn our attention to see how Izakaya Iyashikei, given the staff hierarchy, aesthetic, language, and gendering becomes a place of transnational identity for new Japanese immigrants. Izakaya Iyashikei houses a complex social community, differentiated by social position, gender, ethnicity, and group membership. It is not an isolated pocket of Japanese

identity negotiation, but part of a surrounding, marginalized Japanese community which contributes to place-making processes.

Anthropologists in recent years have developed and utilized a healthy literature around place and place-making processes (Lawrence and Low 1990, 2003, Ingold 2000). I draw a definition of place from Edward Casey's (1996) theory, where place is an essential aspect of a person's way of experiencing the world, a dynamic nexus where sociality and objects situate bodies in a certain spatial arrangement. In a sense place is imagined; it does not need to be tied to a single, physical location. Gupta and Ferguson (1997) brings together essays which articulate how people in postcolonial contexts negotiate their identity in places, using it to resist structures of colonial society and culture. While modalities of resistance are important area of anthropological investigation, it may be that these case studies focus too much on the webs of meaning and symbols, obfuscating the material reality surrounding marginalized and vulnerable populations, valorizing their suffering. As none of my interlocutors migrated under adverse conditions, I diverge from framing just a narrative of resistance. Nonetheless, I argue that the Izakaya Iyashikei is a cultural resource made and used by new Japanese immigrants to incubate a diasporic community and transnational identity. This transnational cultural identity is not fixed or dependent on a history and time; it is ambivalent between shifting discourses on value judgements in the postcolonial situation of Hawai‘i.

Nearing midnight, Takeo, one of the regular Japanese customers, enters the *izakaya* and returns to his seat next to his friends. He was in earlier but left to earn some side money by driving for Uber. Making his way through the dark room, sliding by other customers, he sits down next with his friends, immediately welcomed with a glass of beer and cheers from friends and staff. Their table is a mess of dirty plates and half-empty beer glasses. Masa, taking a break

to talk to Takeo, jests at him, "you should have gone home after you were done with Uber – not come here to waste that money!" Takeo laughingly replies, "This is my home – you can't take that away from me even if I am broke!" He orders a round of whiskey for all us, the staff coming from the kitchen in single file line, surrounding Takeo and his group. Holding our shot glasses with a shaka, we yell "*kanpai*" and drink. One another day, in an interview with Aki, we discussed the value of *izakaya* as a place for social life. He told me, "*Izakaya* are my home away from home." Pausing briefly, he continued, "in fact my wife told me when we moved here that I was not allowed to come home right after work – I needed to unwind somewhere with friends. Izakaya Iyashikei became that place".

Takeo's feeling of acceptance in and familiarity with Izakaya Iyashikei exemplify those of most, if not all, the regular visitors to the pub. The pub's location on a major roadway next to the highway and proximity to a large parking lot makes it easily accessible. On the internet their website is easily found by searching for bars and pubs in both English and Japanese. Excellent reviews reflect the quality food, drink, and service in Izakaya Iyashikei. The pub's name spreads through word of mouth between Japanese-speakers, expanding its reputation and business. Antecedent to the community building in the pub are everyday movements and encounters in a multiethnic city, heavily focused in Mōʻiliʻili. In a sense, then, Izakaya Iyashikei as a place of community is maintained through daily movements of persons through places.

Behaviors indicative of a community and fictive-family, like the staff and customers drinking whiskey together with a shaka pose, is unusual for an *izakaya*; it is something unique to the culture of Izakaya Iyashikei, an act of cooperation, celebration, and deployment of a gesture symbolizing Hawaiʻi. Complementary to these acts are conversations in Japanese. The staff and many customers have a limited grasp of English, but this in no way limits their ability to lead a

productive and happy life in Honolulu. New Japanese immigrants living throughout Honolulu have an intimate, emotional attachment to this place and visit it on a regular basis to maintain social ties. This identity is not a reassertion of Japanese-ness, but rather an intermixing of multiple cultural narratives, socialization, and ethnohistorical migrations in social situations in a single place.

If Japanese immigrants spend money on expensive drink and food regularly in one place, what are the motivations behind it? Izakaya Iyashikei becomes a place of community because of its accessibility, ease of use, and appeal to Japanese cultural tastes. In Japan *izakaya* and other drinking places are popular areas of social life. The appeal to cultural tastes is embodied and called upon through the selection of imported Japanese drink[27], creative Japanese snack foods, nostalgic building design, and Japanese-like service style. The way of being in an *izakaya*, a form of cultural capital, is known to many Japanese; interacting comfortably in that environment, then, makes going out in Honolulu much easier to accomplish, especially given the communication in Japanese (Bourdieu 1985). In a way, coming to *izakaya* in Honolulu is a useful coping mechanism for newly arrived immigrants, bridging different ways of living together under a hybrid Japanese context. As the staff work hard to make the place appear homely and personal, it is highly likely that such customers will be satisfied with their visit and return. The fact that Izakaya Iyashikei is a for-profit business, however, deserves careful attention and will be discussed in the next chapter.

Masa, after one of our interviews, took me out to one of his favorite *yakitori* restaurants, Izakaya Tanoshimi, a 10 minute walk from Izakaya Iyashikei. We both had the day off and Masa wanted to enjoy himself. Along the way I asked him why Mō‘ili‘ili had so many *izakaya*, to

[27] Japanese tastes in alcohol revolves mainly around a few key types, including beer, whiskey, *sake*, and *shochu*. See Smith 1992 for more details.

which he replied "I am not sure but it is probably because a lot of local Japanese live in this area, or maybe because this is a Japanese neighborhood – see the *Torii*?"[28] When we arrived at Izakaya Tanoshimi a gleeful young Japanese man bellowed "*irasshaimase*" (welcome). I felt a strange sense of déjà vu, like we had met before. I asked Masa, and he said Mutsuki, the owner, always comes to Izakaya Iyashikei on his days off. As we sat down, Masa recognized two Japanese girls in the corner, and went over to say hello and chat.

The staff of Izakaya Iyashikei have warm friendships with the employees and owners of most other *izakaya*, *yakitori*, and other Japanese restaurants in Mō'ili'ili, the majority of whom are new Japanese immigrants. As a sign of their community ties, most of them frequent each other's pubs and restaurants for drinks, dinner, and gossip. Near the end of my fieldwork Yusuke and Masa were trying to get one of Izakaya Tanoshimi's staff to transfer, although it was unsuccessful. Past employees of Izakaya Iyashikei, still working in the food service industry, still regularly visit in order to maintain social ties and enjoy the experience of *izakaya*. Because of these intra-business ties, Masa was able to quickly explain to me the particulars of each Japanese pub and restaurant. Some places provide bad service, subpar drinks and food, or, interestingly, are not authentic in that they are not staffed by Japanese-speaking people. Customers too, regulars of Izakaya Iyashikei, also frequent other places around Mō'ili'ili, and so it is quite common for acquaintances and friends to meet unexpectedly.

Mō'ili'ili is reflexively shaped by the agentive practices of these Japanese people and places, where a transnational culture molds and is molded by social relations. While being a

[28] In 2001 the city of Hiroshima presented a half-sized replica of the famous Vermillion Grand Torii Gate to Honolulu as a gift of friendship. Interestingly, it is pointed towards the original gate in Hiroshima. It is a prominent landmark of Mō'ili'ili, although its history is rather contentious among the neighborhood as some view it as a violation of church and state boundaries. Technically, state funds were used to fund it and the gate itself is a religious monument of Shintoism.

residential neighborhood, Mōʻiliʻili is no longer home to just Japanese immigrants, and so the community of Izakaya Iyashikei does not live or work in the area. The *izakaya* is a congregation of people residing across Honolulu, a home among a fragmented urban community. Outside of drinking and eating places, several other businesses and places exist to take care of Japanese national needs and tastes, like a popular Japanese grocer, a Buddhist shrine, a Japanese-language school, a martial arts dojo, and local community and cultural associations. Every year, the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaiʻi, along with the University of Hawaiʻi and Kamehameha Schools, organizes the Mōʻiliʻili Summer Fest, a local fair celebrating *Obon*, or the Japanese Festival of the Dead, a Buddhist holiday paying homage to one's ancestors. While these exist on a periphery for sociality in Izakaya Iyashikei, the pub plays an active part in neighborhood life. The distinct patterns of behavior, gendering, and place-making stages a unique experience among its customers, becoming a familiar place to validate identity, becoming a home away from home in a Japanese neighborhood.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have detailed the minute aspects of social organization in Izakaya Iyashikei. Izakaya Iyashikei, as a stage upon which social identity is performed, is moderated by the staff as a social group, invoking a sense of home and belonging through the use of Japanese, and an aesthetic appeal to embodied cultural tastes. As I have shown, the network of social relations is layered in groups, the staff, the staff and Japanese immigrant customer base, the staff and other regulars, and the various connections between customers. The staff, new Japanese immigrants themselves, work under an embodied cultural hierarchy of power and knowledge actualized through deference and demeanor. While superficial observations desmonstrate equality

in the group, the performances of gender reveal the opposite. Nonetheless, in performing their work duties, the staff contextualize a place in which other immigrants' bodies are placed near each other, cultural meanings and objects are shared and reciprocated, and through alcohol consumption identities and affects are actualized, making the *izakaya* a place of community building. Daily movements of bodies to this place maintain the community, a place for Japanese nationals where participation is easy and identity validation is assured. Non-native Japanese, including Japanese-Americans, are latently excluded from these processes by an inability to participate and concomitant lack of desire on part of the business. We understand, then, a part of the constellation of social nuances at work in the inception and continued negotiation of transnational identity.

CHAPTER THREE
RITUAL, EXHANGE, AND COMMODIFICATION

Introduction

In this chapter I explore the commodification of a religious form, the drinking ritual and its surrounding exchange economies in Izakaya Iyashikei. Throughout I build on previous points of identity negotiation, gender, and place-making. While alcohol is first and foremost commodified in a capitalistic economic system, micro-economies of gift exchange exist between the transnational staff and the customers. The drinking ritual, by deploying embodied cultural capital, is influenced by alcohol brand, alcohol value, choice of drink, and how a drink is consumed (Bourdieu 1985). Alongside the drinking ritual new creations of material culture emerge through the bottle-keep system and retention of bottle caps, demonstrating regular customers' drinking prowess, especially among men. The micro-economy of gift exchange between customers and staff serves as an exemplary channel of status claims, debt infliction, and a transnational linkage between embodied imaginaries of Honolulu and Japan. The elucidation of the flows of material culture and negotiations of transnational identity within the neoliberal market economy will further serve as a base from which we may understand the complex meanings of substance use and its associated effects on health.

Marcel Mauss first approached the notion of reciprocity in gift economies and its preceding necessity of establishing social ties. The gift in trade is said to contain a power which inflicts the receiver with an obligation to return, or debt. The power contained within a gift is socially charged and held. Besides other social and affective ties binding people together, the systems of exchange function to keep society together. The development of reciprocity as a concept was later augmented by Levi-Strauss (1969), establishing it as a nomothetic aspect of social life, and Marshal Sahlins (1972), who identified three aspects of reciprocity, namely

generalized, balanced, and negative, also elevating a need of material gain as a base of economy. Challenging norms of reciprocity and gift exchange in Japan, Inge Daniels (2009) suggests that "loss and the using up of objects may play an important role in social processes of regeneration" (Daniels 2009: 386). I extend this analysis here, that the exchange of alcohol, whether purchased or gifted, is consumed, thus creating temporary value, a social value different and concurrent to its intoxicating effect. As other researchers of Japan and Asia (Parry 1985, Yan 1996, Daniels and Andrews 2009) have noted, in contrast to Mauss, prestige is gained by the gift receiver, as the obligation to provide a gift is established first. The presentation in gaining prestige must be humbled; the social group maintains a face of equality and failing to equalize any status gains is understood as deviant. While purchases of alcohol have no theoretical limit, micro-strands of gift exchanges normally end once the staff repay the inflicted debt. The larger system of obligations to gift and repayment still exists, though, forming a base of sociality, binding Japanese transnational customers and staff together as a community.

Urban Japanese communities are connected "through networks or patterns of relationships (friendship, work, or common interests) often based on consumption activities (shopping, eating, producing, selling) … which in many cases transcend the boundaries of any particular locality" (Clammer 1997:34-35). As I have described in Chapter Two, there is a definite social hierarchy in Izakaya Iyashikei. While there are distinct social groups contained within, the network of Japanese transnationals constitutes a section of the larger Japanese diaspora in Honolulu. In this chapter I further delineate the social aspects of daily events in Izakaya Iyashikei, namely the creation, movement, and consumption of material culture through ritual and exchange and understanding how both gift exchange and commodity purchase networks coexist. Going back to the conceptualizations of a transnational person, we see that a

lived connection to the home country must exist (Adachi 2006:2-3). This commodification of ritual and gift exchange creates transnational identities through the maintenance of a lived connection between Honolulu and Japan.

This community and its systems of exchange, while evocative, are rooted in a locus of capitalistic commercial activity. That is, these rituals and exchanges, while representative of true gift exchange, are also commodity and service purchases in a business setting. These social ties are intimate with the neoliberal market economy, bound to its flows. I argue that, at one level, we have a diasporic community connected through forms of ritual and exchange, then, on a second level, we have a business model operating through these ties. I do not necessarily see these meaningful relationships as a masquerading neoliberal economy, but as a development of long social and economic change in Japan and Hawai'i, wherein alcohol and its consumption moved from religious rituals and private in-home use to a commodified product in urban city centers.

The Drinking Ritual

> "I usually start drinking beer, then move to shochu with water, *mizuwari*[29], and finish off with wine. I really like *Kuro Kirishima*, a regular brand of shochu, although it is really expensive in Hawai'i. Do you remember? It is the one we drank a few weeks ago." - Aki

The experience of drinking and eating at Izakaya Iyashikei is structured in a particular way, one that is known to Japanese nationals, embodied through experience with drinking culture in Japan. The consumption of alcohol is prepared and completed in a specific manner, making it a ritual, not a technical behavior (Helman 2007:224). Drinking alcohol here is more than simply becoming intoxicated, the nuanced choices and preferences of alcohol, ways of

[29] *Mizuwari* refers to a mixing water, usually cold, with shochu. It is a common method of drinking in Izakaya Iyashikei.

drinking, and cheering toasts with the staff, and keeping a specific bottle at the *izakaya* take a mundane, taken-for-granted aspect of everyday life into a complex ritualistic practice.

The drinking ritual begins with an order for drinks, usually within a few minutes after being seated, in an arrangement that reflects hierarchical roles, in the *izakaya* (Partanen 2006:189). With Japanese nationals, the choice of beverage is usually limited to one choice and given to all members of the group, with the head(s), usually men, making the decision. This group consensus is in direct opposition to American bars, where each individual will order their own, different, drink. As Masa explained to me, in Japanese society it is considered good social etiquette to maintain group cohension, resulting in individuals following with the group's decision. Regular customers, especially transnational Japanese, often keep a bottle of shochu on the top shelf behind the bar, where most of the customers' keep bottles are displayed. The flow of drink is highly linear, however, moving from one or a few rounds of beer to the keep bottle. Beer is served either in a chilled glass as draught (*nama*), or in a glass bottle alongside smaller, thin glasses. The large bottle (*bin beeru*) is a staple of Japanese beer culture (Alexander 2013), where individuals in the ritual pour each other's drinks, keeping the cups full at all times. In fact, it is considered rude to pour your own drink, so everyone in the group must make sure everyone else's are full at all times (Partanen 2006:190).

On the other hand, this practice doesn't exist as strongly in Izakaya Iyashikei, maybe given the fact that not all drinks are shareable and immediately refillable by immediate others. Aki, a middle aged business CEO living in Honolulu, tells me that the large bottles stimulate sociality by the need to pour each other's drinks. It is not a solitary, individual task as in American bars which serve alcohol in bottles or single glasses. As Anne Allison (1992) noted, this social expectation to pour was stratified by social position and, in the case of the hostess

club, also performed by the hostess. In Izakaya Iyashikei, however, the staff do not pour drinks for customers, but will always ask if refills are needed. A gender division is visible, as usually the server is one of the female part time staff. The keep bottle, usually of shochu, is served straight, with a pitcher of water or ice, and with or without lemon. Small glass cups are circulated among all members of the group too, prompting everyone to drink from the keep bottle. The drinking ritual, once it has begun, will continue for at least an hour, sometimes continuing for several.

Continuing a discussion of gender performativity, we continue to see the assertion of masculinity in something as mundane as ordering drinks. If we recall from Chapter One that *izakaya* historically catered to single men in cities, the fact that ordering drinks, of interacting in the pub, is and has been for men. That being said, there is a difference in drinking habits among transnational Japanese women and men in this pub. Women break away from the cultural assumptions and order different drinks, usually cocktails and wine. Men, no matter the makeup of the group, stick to beer, *sake, shochu*, and whiskey. Women in a group of men will usually maintain group consensus. It is outside of the gaze of the men, however, when they exercise their ability to choose, resisting cultural norms and expectations while exerting their agency through redefining the drinking ritual.

The brands of alcohol served at Izakaya Iyashikei range from generic to high end, all priced along a relative gradient reflecting quality, although overpriced when compared to local specialty alcohol stores and the local Japanese market. *Asahi*, a large, well-known macrobrewer in Japan, is the brand of draught offered, with a 16.oz glasses selling for around $6. Conversely, a 12-pack of canned 12.oz beer may be purchased at a nearby Japanese grocer for $9. Similarly, the price of a bottle of this *shochu* varies significantly. Izakaya Iyashikei sells a common brand

name bottle called *Kurokirishima* for around $45, the local Japanese grocer for $20, and convenience stores in Japan for around $8-9. High-end *sake* and *shochu* is sold for upwards of $60-$80 at the *izakaya*, however it sometimes is not available at other places. Regular Japanese customers usually prefer which sake they would like, rarely adventuring beyond. Every brand of beer and sake offered is imported from Japan, maintaining its authenticity and taste. Several importers[30] and local beverage companies handle alcohol distribution, making nearly daily visits to Izakaya Iyashikei during the afternoon hours before opening. As there is a significant presence of Japanese pubs and restaurants in Honolulu, acquiring Japanese imported drink is not a difficult task.

In addition to a standard selection of beer, sake, and mixed drinks, liquor features prominently during the drinking ritual. The staff all enjoy shots of whiskey and *habushu*[31], marking a drinking preference atypical of Japanese. Yusuke explained this difference in that, generally, Japanese people enjoy savoring a drink, like good *sake* and beer, over time with friends in the *izakaya*. A shot is consumed quickly, however, and is disliked since the sociality is non-existent. Since they are in Hawai'i, though, they adopt what they call "American culture" and sell shots in groups to maintain a social aspect. I see this as not only a way to sell alcohol quickly and easily, but as a method of asserting a transnational identity through drink. On most nights, through conversation and subtle pressure from the server, regular customers will buy a round of shots for themselves and the staff. The staff, finding a right moment to pause in their

[30] Of the several importers of Japanese liquor, most are staffed by Japanese nationals, conducting their daily business in Japanese.

[31] *Habushu* effectively translates to 'Okinawan snake wine'. *Habushu* is claimed to have healing properties because of the subtle amount of pit viper venom present in the liquid. The reason why *habushu* is used often is due to Yusuke's belief that it is healthy. As he told me, he grandmother gave him a shot of it when he was 13 years old in order to combat the effects of a cold. Apparently it was effective and ever since then he has upheld its healing properties.

work, will walk out in single file, holding a shot glass between their thumb and pinky, like the shaka sign, a common gesture in Hawai'i. Forming a wall around the sponsoring customer, everybody yells 'cheers' (*kanpai*) and then drinks together, glasses coming together for a customary toast, and the staff hands patting and rubbing the customer'(s) backs. Most of the time the customer will pay for each shot 'gifted' to the staff, however, as I will discuss later, sometimes the shots are gifted from the staff. In this way we see the staff involving themselves directly in the drinking ritual, establishing a feeling of shared experience and meaning around alcohol.

The drinking ritual is powerful in modifying the consciousness, and not just because of the innate effects of alcohol on the embodied state. In a consciousness-altering substance ritual, the total drug effect (Helman 2007) is moderated by several factor: the state of the drug receiver, the state of the drug giver, the altering effects of the drug, and the context in which the drug is consumed. As we know, the physical and imaginary space of the *izakaya* as a used, homely, and aesthetically traditional Japanese place imbues a sense of familiarity, nostalgia, and security. The drinking ritual, then, generally creates a positive affect among Japanese transnationals. The drinking ritual establishes intoxicated dialogue about the joys and pains of everyday mundane life, a dialogue wrapped in laughter and joking. As Mary Douglas says, "joking is the suspension of social structure", wherein the drinking ritual we see creation of a state of pleasure, happiness, and relief (Douglas 1975:95-96). We must remember, though, that forms of Japanese alcohol culture have long separated from indigenous Shinto rites and ceremonies[32], becoming commodified in a capitalistic market economy under channels of leisure and relaxation. The

[32] That is not to say alcohol, especially sake, plays a role in traditional religious rituals in the current day. The conceptions, uses, and meanings of alcohol have long diverged from religious contexts, developing throughout history under different political-economic structures.

drinking ritual has a fixed price value and by its availability behind a paywall, stratifying accessibility, especially to less wealthy Japanese transnationals, usually men.

The Sake Bottle becomes a Site of Materializing Memory

A line of glass bottles, some cloudy white, smooth silver, and dark brown, fill the top row of the shelf in the *izakaya*. Many more bottles are hidden away in the cloth covered shelves lining the walls to the bathrooms. One silver bottle in particular, about ¾ full of a clear shochu, is carefully brought down by Keiko, the server. This bottle, despite being the same brand of shochu as its brothers on the shelf, is unique. Handwritten notes, doodles, and drawings decorate the bottle. They are messages written at another time, words and pictures memorialized on the bottle to be consumed, much like the alcohol contained within, to mediate sociality during the drinking ritual. The memory of laughter and drunkenness, emblemized on the keep bottle, is recalled in the consciousness again as it is presented. When the night is over, the bottle, with its new markings and drawings, returns to become enshrined high up on the shelf. "Aki", it's says, right above the name of the brand. It is just for him and his group. It is an individual and social experience that may seem trivial and mundane, but is a significant example of the essence of the Izakaya Iyashikei's drinking culture.

The keep bottle system is regular feature of Japanese *izakaya*, and is a feature shared among most, if not all, *izakaya* in Honolulu. As the staff drink with the customers, they drink from their bottles, receiving gifted alcohol. Once a bottle of shochu[33] is purchased, the bottle,

[33] Customers also purchase *nihonshu*, which is commonly known as 'Japanese sake', but *nihonshu* does not keep long once opened and outside of chilled storage. Customers are not able to keep it on the premise and so are usually encouraged to consume the entire bottle during the current drinking session.

until it is all consumed, will be kept by the staff at no charge. The staff take great care in remembering regular customers' names, and so as soon as a group is seated they will be asked if they are using the bottle and their preference for drinking from it. When a bottle is purchased for the first time the staff provide a set of coloring markers with the bottle so that the customers may write their name(s) and enjoy drawing on the bottle. Writings include simple written Japanese phrases like "fun, happy, or laughter" to comical characters and objects, sometimes inappropriate. Depending on how marked up the bottle is they will provide the markers on subsequent visits to the *izakaya*. The wall of bottles features a great variety of amusing drawings, most meaningless without the original, now lost, context of writing.

The bottle keep system demonstrates the complicated duality of gift and commodity exchanges, how two networks overlap with each other. The system is a form of gift exchange, in a Maussian sense, where the *izakaya* staff provide a gift by storing the bottle until the customer's return, whereby they re-give the bottle and accompanying rituals. The gift exchange, then, still works as a creation and transference of obligations centered on the movement of alcohol. The staff articulate the bottle keep system as a service for the customers, as if it were a common-sense process in one's drinking experience. However, despite its presentation in the social situation, the purchase of the bottle is the antecedent step in fulfilling this aspect of the drinking ritual. The staff do not say "we will keep this bottle you paid for", but "we will hold this for your next visit". Money is exchanged despite the surrounding discourse. The gift is not free, but rather obliges a customer to return to this specific *izakaya*. I asked Yusuke, the manager, if they ever throw away any bottles and he said they "would never think of it". There may be a day when an infrequent customer returns, and through this exchange, the staff establish a precedent of a seat in a home that is always open, no matter time and space. In breaking away from Mauss, though,

in providing this service for customers, the staff elevate the status and prestige of the customer as one whose business and company was enjoyable, and whose return is welcomed and expected. While the service may be tied to the initial purchase of a bottle, the service does not have to be rendered, but it is a cultural norm that it must. The bottle-keep system is a common, yet special phenomenon found in Japan and it is recreated nearly exactly in Honolulu's diasporic *izakaya* and other Japanese drinking places.

A few groups of regular transnational Japanese males, ranging from two to five individuals, visit Izakaya Iyashikei every week, sometimes even twice or more. They visit so frequently that they do not place orders with the staff as they always drink the same shochu and eat the same food, giving the staff leeway to prepare it immediately. Every small plastic bottle cap on their bottles of shochu are kept after completion and the caps are stacked and pushed into each other to make a totem. After years of visits, the stack of bottle caps is easily over 30ft long, and is broken up into several different stacks, designated by a particular customer group. The stacks are kept in the corner behind the bar, leaning against the shelving of keep bottle, visible to everyone. I asked Sho why they keep the bottle caps and he replied that they signify who are the best customers, a status that is continually tested as each group tries to outdo the other in drinking. The competition is not fierce, per say, as each group does not intentionally drink more; they attend regularly and drink moderately, naturally accumulating large amounts of bottle caps. This competition is a channel of masculine performativity, whereby the "manliest" title is bestowed to the group who drinks the most. Among the intra-group relations, then, they maintain their masculinity through showing each other they are able to drink heavily. It is rather perplexing to ponder how much money has been spent in the collection of these bottle caps. It is fair to say that the "best" customers are not the best drinkers, but the most paying.

The values charged into alcohol become multiple, and are equally actualized and lost through consumption (Daniels 2009:386). In the first sense alcohol is a consciousness modifying substance, the effects of which are moderated through the immediate microsocial situation, although macrostructural factors still form a backdrop against its use. Second, the value of alcohol is in its ability to function as a social lubricator, providing an excuse for family, friends, and other close members of the social group to meet. As I will discuss further in the next chapter, the underlying cultural conceptions of alcohol intoxication allow for individuals to express feelings without social repercussion or offense. Third, value is created using the sake bottle as a site of drawing, a method of expressing individual thought and action. However, once the bottle is empty, it is thrown out, further limiting the existence of given value. The bottle(s) while kept, though, mark a point in time between drinking sessions, effectively marking the drinking ritual as an ongoing process of flowing in and out of intoxication and sociality.

Transnational Gift Exchange

On a rather quiet Tuesday night I tried to keep busy by cleaning various pots and pans but ended up talking with Masa, my partner in the kitchen for the night. He just got back from his one day off in about eight days, apparently doing nothing much besides sleeping all day after a night of heavy drinking. Yusuke was texting a girl over *Line*, a messaging application popular in Japan, while resting by leaning over a counter. Sho's phone, propped against the cash register, played a recording of the Tokyo Giant's recent baseball game, the sounds of cheering and sports announcers faintly carrying through the kitchen. Takeo, a regular customer who just returned from Japan, casually walked back into the kitchen to drop off a boxed bottle of high end *shochu*. "This is my gift to you from my recent trip to Japan, please enjoy it" he said with a big smile. And the staff

gathered around the bottle, commenting on its quality, expressing their thanks, and stating their eagerness to drink it. "I can't wait to go back to Japan" Masa said eagerly. Not too soon after Yusuke poured drinks for the staff and Takeo. With a loud "*kanpai*" they toasted his return to Honolulu and downed the alcohol. By the end of the night the entire bottle was empty.

This experience is a rather regular feature of social life in Izakaya Iyashikei, the rituals of gift exchange between regular customers and the staff. In Japan, a cultural system of gift exchange exists between both formal and informal social networks. Obligations to gift are found throughout regular times during the year, ranging from Shinto, Buddhist, or Christian holidays, rites of passage[34], return gifts[35], and to travel gifts (Daniels 2009:388-398). Here I focus on travel gifts. When some individual returns from a trip, either domestic or international, there is an expectation that a gift or souvenir (*omiyage*) is purchased for said social networks. Failing in this obligation is a social taboo and may be quite damaging to one's reputation. In this section I draw attention to and examine the rituals of transnational gift exchange among new Japanese diasporees in the context of Izakaya Iyashikei. I draw upon the insights of reciprocity and social binding as delineated by Erving Goffman and Marcel Mauss to exemplify the social and cultural work done in Izakaya Iyashikei through obligations to give, receive, and reciprocate (Goffman 1967, Mauss 2016). I look at Mauss' "moral persons", which are characteristic of a social group and subsumed within circles of obligation duty. As I examined before in Chapter One, the sociocultural patterns of behavior guiding the performances and interpersonal interaction work to build and stratify social ties and negotiate identity. Moving the lens of analysis closer, we see how gift exchanges as

[34] Here I refer to the general, various types of rituals that bestow new social statuses, ranging from graduation ceremonies, the securement of a new job, and to the birth of a new baby.
[35] Return gifts, or *O Kaeshi*, are gifts given to individuals as a thank you for receipt of another gift. Return gifts are often smaller and lower in value than the original gift.

instances of ritual work to build a community of new Japanese diasporees in Izakaya Iyashikei through regular interchanges of debt infliction and repayment built upon cultural tradition and modified through structure.

Out of the approximately thirty regular customers at Izakaya Iyashikei, there are a significant number who take short trips to Japan, either personal or on business, on a frequent basis, usually every few months[36]. Most trips that I heard about were for business purposes, however. Upon return to Honolulu and the *izakaya*, then, they enjoy being welcomed back and the presenting their gift, usually some sort of alcohol or snack food. The gift, once presented, is enjoyed socially, although not usually by the gift giver unless offered[37]. Nearly all *omiyage*, or souvenirs, in Japan are delicately packaged to display an image of high quality and value, although they are rather inexpensive[38]. In fact, it is not uncommon to hear of stories where more time was spent on choosing a gift than actually enjoying the trip. In this way the gift exchanges between staff and customer are a ritual as only gifts from Japan are purchased and redistributed. The gift itself becomes a symbol representing this relationship, and its circulation establishes an individual and social connection to Japan through the gift giver. Further, the gift becomes charged with value and in its exchange giver and receiver strengthen their relationship on the base of shared experiences of living 'back home in Japan'. The gift exchange, as maintenance of a lived connection to Japan, is a channel through which an identity of 'new Japanese immigrant is reaffirmed.

[36] While flights to Tokyo from Honolulu are only about 6 hours of flight time, the cost of a round-trip ticket is usually around $600.

[37] During my fieldwork I never saw a regular customer eat or drink their gift unless prompted by the staff. Near the end of the summer I took a trip to Japan and brought back a box of chocolates. After presenting it and discussing my trip, Masa, Yusuke, and Yudai expressed their thanks and started to eat them. Curious, I did not eat any, but soon was offered some by Yusuke.

[38] Common, mass produced gifts such as these will cost from $5 to $20.

Takeo-san, returning to the kitchen to borrow a cigarette from Sho, promising it would be his last, listed off the places in Tokyo he visited, offering a few humorous anecdotes about his nights out. Yusuke replied, saying "I will go to those same places when I go on vacation next month". Takeo-san quickly retorted "you will do that after I go back - I am going back next week!" In almost disbelief Yusuke wondered aloud "where does he get all this money - you must have a girlfriend over there?"

While the gift exchanges appear relatively egalitarian, the entire exchange is built upon a common, shared cultural capital, and the receipt of a gift provides prestige (Bourdieu 1985, Parry 1985, Yano 1996, Daniels 2009). The delivering of a gift, then, becomes a medium in which capital is exercised, as in the giver discussing the story and their knowledge behind the gift chosen or some enjoyable moment of their trip. The receivers, usually the staff, express their awe and a desire to return to Japan. Japan becomes a symbol of 'a place to be', a symbolic meaning distributed alongside the material gift. In the situation above, Takeo demonstrates his knowledge of Tokyo by pinpointing specific locations of leisure, locations which Yusuke is also aware of, but is unable to visit. He equalizes the status claim, though, by expressing his plan to visit the same places when he goes on vacation, performatively re-affirming himself as a Japanese transnational. When Takeo restates his plan to return next week, not in a few months, he creates an identity that is, in this context, more Japanese, but also his socioeconomic status which affords him the ability to engage in trips to Japan and in this gift exchange. The impact money has on participating in the social life of Izakaya Iyashikei will be critically analyzed later in this chapter.

The exchange of a gift inflicts debt upon the receiver, who understands they will be liable for repayment when they go on a trip. There is no time limit on repayment, however. One night, Masa joked that Takeo went back to Japan too often and so they had several unopened bottles of

gifted alcohol in the fridge. The staff are not excluded from this circle of exchange, though, and repay the debt promptly, with free alcohol, usually a round of whiskey, *habushu*, or tequila. This break in kata may be framed as an aspect of a distinctly Izakaya Iyashikei culture, where new cultural resources are utilized to participate in the circulars of debt infliction. Concurrently, the staff take individual, week long vacations a couple times throughout the year which serves as another opportunity to formally participate in the exchange. Again, the exchanges are not overtly competitive and in all cases the gifts are small, single packages of some non-perishable food or alcohol. In Chapter Four I will extend this analysis by examining how the repayment of inflicted debt by way of free alcohol is not just an isolated response but rather an aspect of a health-related ritual within the microcosm of Izakaya Iyashikei culture. As Yusuke explained to me, the daily habit of drinking alcohol with customers is "Iyashikei-style".

As Daniels (2010:165) argues, the exchanged gift does not need to reflect on the obligation to repay in exchange, but that the gift becomes materialized culture, one among many items, in the context of the home. Out of the many foodstuffs the staff has received, they do not eat everything and so it remains behind. Stuffed and crammed between spaces around the cash register, in the refrigerators and freezers, and hidden away high up on the shelves in the kitchen, gifted items sit and wait to be eaten. Despite the mass of snacks and bottle of alcohol kept, the staff feel no need to dispose of any, instead preferring to gift it away when circumstances arise. After one shift Masa approached me and said Sho had a gift for me, something which he said would "demonstrate their love for me". While skeptical, I awaited Sho's arrival from the freezer hidden in the ladies' bathroom. Sho presented me a plastic bag from Walmart, full of smaller bags of octopus flavored *senbei*, or salted crackers. Confused, I asked why I was being given so many crackers, to which Masa whispered "we don't like them and so we are giving them to you". I later discovered that the

gifted crackers were sitting uneaten for close to a year, and yet they retained a value as a gift and couldn't be thrown away. Gifting it to me, however, provided a respectable way of removing the unwanted item. Many more unopened and unused gifts sit atop shelves and crammed inside refrigerators, still containing a timeless value and source of prestige for the staff.

These exchanges demonstrate how both gift exchanges and commodity purchase networks coexist. Every item, at one point, was acquired through purchase. Further, the pub, the site of multiple exchanges, exists through using wage-labor relationships to serve a specific customer base. This fact is not important in gift exchange, but participation in the market economy is mandatory nonetheless. In the pub, the gift exchange is meant for and accessible to Japanese diasporees living in Hawai‘i. Partaking in this exchange presupposes an income high enough to support the regular flights to Japan and the purchase of gifts, food, and alcohol. This dual situation exemplifies how social groups, tied together in a globalized capitalistic economy, rework commodities into meaningful material culture through interaction. In investigating the layers of social groups within the pub's social structure, the solidarity of a group of individuals who share common life experiences as transnational Japanese citizens is strengthened through engaging in and perpetuating an exchange of gifts from their homeland of Japan.

Gift Exchange between Local Businesses

Izakaya Iyashikei is well known in the Mō‘ili‘ili community as a great place to drink, eat, and relax. The staff work hard to make their business a home away from home, and other businesses in the community have taken notice. The owners and employees of several local businesses, most of whom are not Japanese, frequent Izakaya Iyashikei in order to trade product for product, whether it is alcohol or food. In this way, Izakaya Iyashikei places itself not only as a

space wherein a complex Japanese diasporic community exists, but also as one of many such places in the larger social relations of Mō‘ili‘ili. This Japanese diaspora asserts an identity which affects the culture of Mō‘ili‘ili and is reflexively affected by other businesses, local Japanese-Hawai‘i traditions, and the neighborhood community.

During a regular, busy night, Masa answers the phone, still flipping food in a frying pan. He answers in Japanese, as is customary, but quickly switches to English, recognizing who it is, and quickly takes a food order. He lets me know that the staff of McCormick Bakery, just down the street, are coming by to pick up dinner. To-go orders are not advertised but are possible for special customers. About 30 minutes later, with the food ready and packaged, a single middle-aged woman walks in with several paper bags bearing the name of their cafe. Masa and Yusuke make a trade, food for the bags, completely without money. After they walk her out, thanking her, they quickly come back to search through the bags - bags full of assorted pastries, muffins, and other bakery goods.

On a different night, nearing the end of my summer fieldwork, I was helping Masa serve on an extremely busy Saturday night. The owners and key employees of a local brewery, Aloha Brewing Co., were enjoying a night of drinking and food in the *izakaya*. Masa said they come every month with samples of new beers they have been experimenting with, and trade alcohol for alcohol. Although Aloha Brewing Co. doesn’t have the proper credentials to can and bottle their own beer, they presented us with several large can of unmarked beer. Once the night slowed down we, and the rest of the staff, snuck back to the kitchen to try the new beer, a beer that we will never have the opportunity to try again.

Drawing from these two examples, the gift exchanges are a little different from those between customers in that the inter-business exchanges are completely egalitarian, where each side

trades their own 'quality' product for the other. In the trade both sides receive prestige immediately, connecting the businesses together through a mutually beneficial relationship between the staff and owners. Of course, principles articulated by Mauss are still present, namely an immediate obligation to repay the inflicted debt. In this exchange the timing of trade is important, as each product is fixed with a market price value. Even though no money is exchanged the gifts are exchanged for each other instantaneously. In this transaction the ties between the traders are formal in contrast to the informal ties between transnational Japanese. In this final example, then, we see that exchange economies are stratified based upon the nature of established social ties among the staff of Izakaya Iyashikei. And despite the lack of money exchanged, the commodity market still exerts pressure. Without receiving money for the commodities lost, the producer loses the chance for revenue. The ingredients and labor behind the commodity are already paid for, creating a debt that the company will not resolve. Of course, the value lost on a few cans of beer or plates of food by no means cripples business operations, but it still represents a loss – a loss which in this case may be beneficial as it creates meaningful relationships in the community.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the many ways in which material culture is created, moved, and consumed to create ephemeral or lasting value. Alcohol and food move through a dual exchange network, one of gift exchange and one of commodity exchange. I examined seemingly basic and mundane, yet ever complex, form of ritual and their embeddedness in exchange networks of various configurations, situating my analysis on principles of reciprocity as theorized by Marcel Mauss and Inge Daniels yet adding an examination of underlying economic motivators. I focused on the drinking ritual as the most important in Izakaya Iyashikei, as social glue at the heart of

negotiating subjectivity. In this are continued gender performances, where women assert a break from traditional gender roles by ordering individualized drinks, not following embodied cultural expectations of group similarity and consensus. The form and embodied meanings of *izakaya*, as I argued in Chapter One, is a product of modernity, not a distinct part of traditional Japanese culture. Izakaya Iyashikei carries this connection as it is first and foremost a business selling products and services at a premium price, the present form of a space transformed over many decades.

The effects of alcohol, the potency of social inclusion in the group, and the expressions of meaning through marking the keep bottle constitute the unique features of the drinking ritual. Men perform a masculine identity through regular, competitive drinking to show each other they are men, not concerned with the vast amounts of money spent. While the drinking ritual is placed in a value-assigned market economy, a few strands of other stratified exchange networks exist on top of it, like the gifting of shots of alcohol for birthday parties and other special rites of passage. And outside of the immediate market economies, embodied senses of obligations to provide and receive travel gifts have led to a regular current of transnational gift exchanges between regular Japanese nationals taking trips to Japan. A break in traditional gifting obligations is demonstrated through the staff's immediate repayment through gifted alcohol, whereby prestige is culled from receipt of the gift, but also reciprocated by giving prestige to said customer. In this way Izakaya Iyashikei becomes burdened with many unopened, unused gifts, marking a collective of prestige and status, like a typical Japanese home (Daniels and Andrews 2010:158-159). Immediate gift exchanges of food for food and alcohol for alcohol between the *izakaya* and other local neighborhood businesses positions the *izakaya* staff in the local community, becoming a part of it and regular destination for people living and working in the area. Outside of the exchanges, Japanese tourism, imports of

Japanese goods, and foreign direct investment continue to maintain Japanese presence and control in Hawai‘i.

Overall, much like material exchanges in Japan, similar forms have been adopted in Izakaya Iyashikei, but are altered slightly to adapt to local, immediate sociocultural and economic circumstances. Izakaya as drinking establishments have a long history in Japan, a history intimately tied with rapid industrialization resulting in drastic adjustments to social structure. This drinking form was historically associated with good health through an indigenous religion and family and local community institutions. It has altered with economic change, lodging itself in a capitalistic form still offering the potential for therapy but miring in networks that risk individual health and well-being, which will be shown in the next chapter. If we return to understanding culture as expressed through social relations, we see a piece of a unique, transnational Japanese diasporic culture and economy in Honolulu's historic Japantown, Mō‘ili‘ili.

CHAPTER FOUR
ALCOHOL, SUBJECTIVITY, AND HEALTH

Introduction

"I would drink more, but I have to drive home tonight" - Masato

In this chapter I examine the nuanced configurations of alcohol use as it relates to health and subjectivity. I argue that regular, structured use of alcohol, as seen in Izakaya Iyashikei, is therapeutic and moderates mental health for Japanese nationals. Substance use is a social process intertwined with identity negotiation and in *izakaya* it is molded as a modality of good health. I construct health as a multifaceted state, as alcohol may be beneficial and detrimental to the body and sense of self depending on a variety of variable factors, both individual and social. I turn my lens of focus a little closer in, following the narratives of Aki, Keiko, and Masa as they find different meanings of health in alcohol use. I conceptualize a theory of narrative drawn from Cheryl Mattingly (2010), where "as everyday actors, we located ourselves in unfolding stories that inform our commitments about what is possible and desirable, our narrative anticipations and judgements about how things should and will unfold" (43). These stories are expressed from an individual, and in unison with others they form a cultural or therapeutic narrative that negotiates identity and health, wherein individuals are embedded (Mattingly 1998, Calabrese 2013). Building on this, I utilize Joseph Calabrese's concepts of *therapeutic emplotment* and *consciousness modification*, where the former is "an interpretive activity or application or a preformed cultural narrative, as formed by Cheryl Mattingly, placing events into a story that is therapeutic" and the latter "refers to any cultural technology use to modify the consciousness state of self or others", aiding in placing individual bodies into the narrative structure (Mattingly 1998, Calabrese 2013:117). I also see narrative as a means to express an inner notion of self, where self-identity is interpreted and negotiated (MacIntyre 1981, Taylor 1989). Everyday life,

the expectations, the desires, the pleasures, and the fears, are all connected through our individual narratives, existing in the moment of articulation, ever malleable to time. There are finely layered ways of knowing and understanding the self, others, and the world (Polkinghorne 1988). Stories provide a window into a knowledge and through expression and interaction, change it.

Alcohol use is part of a therapeutic narrative that rests on distinct, socially constructed knowledges and embodied experience. These narratives, the stories of life, are the heart of an ethnography, just as Bruner states that "our anthropological productions are our stories about their stories; we are interpreting the people as they are interpreting themselves." (Bruner 1986:3-30). The joys and pains expressed through narratives are the other piece, one that I cover here. Building off of the previous chapters, the sociocultural context surrounding these narratives should be clear. I investigate deeper, articulating how life history colors another context of meaning and affect. Similarly, I move past social interaction as a primary object of study.

I weave together multiple narratives shared to me by Aki, Keiko, and Masa, stories shared in Izakaya Iyashikei and in our interviews. The statements I make are their interpretations, coupled with, but less so than before, my observations. A narrative is not just a single person's voice existing in solitude; its consists of supplementing and contrasting voices, each playing a part in its construction, just as Byron Good observes that "the narrators—the person with an illness, family members participating in their care, medical professionals—are in the midst of the story they are telling." (Good 1994). I focus primarily on Aki, Keiko, and Masa, while other actors, as they arise, will exist on a periphery[39]. The staff in Izakaya Iyashikei are not medical

[39] This is not to say that I value my other interlocutor's narratives less. Given the constraints of my analysis in this thesis, I wish to focus a full attention on a select few individuals who I felt best represented a mix of different life experiences and meanings given the social and cultural contexts of Izakaya Iyashikei.

professionals, but, they are the ones who listen to their customer's lives and inherit troubles. In sharing these stories, the staff become woven into it, affecting the interpretation of signs, objects, and feelings while intoxicated. And there is a dialectic, too, when the staff share their own narratives, creating a complex, reflexive process of meaning making. These three stories are different, seemingly contradictory, but understandable in that they are situated in an individual's life course, influenced by socialization, duration of time in Japan and Honolulu, and other social factors.

Cultural meanings are embedded in social relations and embodied experience interacts with a therapeutic narrative and modified consciousness. One must 'learn' to be drunk, and that aspects of health in moderation is a cultural construct that becomes 'known' through experience. And further, to restate my main argument, the process of mutual intoxication and narrative emplotment in Izakaya Iyashikei is therapeutic for new Japanese diasporees given distinct channels of transnational knowledge and non-knowledge, or lacunas. Elaborating on Izakaya Iyashikei as a constructed-space[40], I argue that it is also a therapeutic landscape, where "healing process(es) work itself out in places" (Gesler 1992:743). Just as Dorinne Kondo (1990) illustrated how identity creation is a social process, substance use is a concomitant social procedure in the mediation of subjectivity.

Knowing and Not Knowing about Alcohol

> "We talk about intimate things. You reveal yourself. People can *feel* how much they should reveal - how much trust to give. You wouldn't discuss your affair with someone you just met, right?" - Aki

[40] I reference this process to the previous discussion of place in Chapter One.

As we delve into the nuances of health and well-being interlaced in public rituals of conscious modification and their flow alongside a continuing cultural narrative, it is important to discuss embedded epistemologies as they are constituted in this process. That is, the effects of alcohol, its surrounding prescriptions and proscriptions, are constructed and transmitted to become 'known' by Japanese customers in the pub. Both a knowledge and nonknowledge is fashioned through interaction and discourse in social situations, forming a foundation on which a cultural narrative is positioned. I draw inspiration from Murray Last's critical essay "The Importance of Knowing about not Knowing" and posit that the therapeutic narrative is efficacious in part because it embodies a distinct vein of knowledge and nonknowledge actualized and recalled through experience, or cultural capital (Bourdieu 1985, Last 2007). The potentiality of healing rests on the learned, embodied past experiences of alcohol use and intoxication, where one 'learns to feel' in a state of modified consciousness, where ways of feeling and experience are molded through social interaction. Knowing how to drink, how to feel when it is acceptable to reveal inner emotions[41], and capturing the sense of relief and home through *izakaya* is learned, where alcohol is 'known' in a certain way. We may view the litany of problems and sanctions around alcohol abuse in the United States simply as inconvenient facts as part of a constructed lacuna, where such facts are not made 'known', or possibly, if they are, are not cared or wanted to be known. Labelling substances as 'medicine' or 'drug', framing them as right or wrong, is a culturally charged political practice with consequences for marginalized populations, especially given the hegemony of biomedicine, the culture of victimization, and criminalization of substance use in the United States.

[41] Here I refer back to the conceptual categories of *honne* and *tatemae*, of real emotions and public face.

Alcohol is not articulated as a dangerous substance to customers in Izakaya Iyashikei. In the commencement of the drinking ritual, staff undermine United States' law by not checking customer's identification for proof of legal drinking age. There were several nights where the staff knew there were Japanese tourists and nationals whom were under the age of 21, and while this was known, it was not a cause for worry or concern. Similarly, in the back of the kitchen, commercial sized crates of shochu and kegs of Japanese branded Asahi line the wall near behind the front counter, each displaying a yellow warning label detailing the dangers of alcohol for pregnant women and operating machinery. These facts are not made known to customers, however, as there is either a predisposition to tacitly understanding the dangers, and possibly a desire to not 'known' about the dangers during the drinking session. Further, nowhere on the packaging, or in the knowledge of the staff, or made known during the narrative emplotment, are the particular nuances of alcohols interaction with the body. For example, alcohol interferes with the absorption and utilization of thiamine, an essential vitamin use by the central nervous system. Deficiencies in thiamine may lead to serious chronic brain problems, such as the alcohol-induced psychosis called Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome[42] (Martin et al. 2004). The discourse of alcohol use within the *izakaya* rarely covers issues, dangers, or problems with alcohol, from the impairment of judgement to cirrhosis of the liver. The general avoidance of driving while intoxicated, though, is a generally shared concern, albeit a large part of common knowledge. Although relatively rare, Japanese nationals will sometimes drink to excess, yet they will not be cut off of alcohol. The only limit to drinking is individual capacity and outer, immediate social group's intervention. If we return to conceptions of drunkenness, where the modified

[42] Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome consists of two separate conditions, acute Wernicke Encephalopathy, developing into the long-term condition Korsakoff Syndrome. Thiamine deficiencies lead to permanent damage to the brain's memory centers, leading to anterograde amnesia.

consciousness is a state in which personal feelings may be expressed and socially validated without harm, we see that including points of ill-health would be destructive to the context and feeling of intimacy and home-making. Japanese nationals do not come to Izakaya Iyashikei to ruin their bodies and risk ruining their lives, but come to enjoy drink, conversation, and indulge in a feeling of belonging in a place they may call theirs.

Knowledge and nonknowledge of alcohol occurs as a process, actualizing through a social course of interaction between intoxicated bodies and modified states of being. In this social course are distinct channels of forgetting and remembering. To demonstrate this, I turn to drug-induced amnesia, commonly called blacking out, as an experience that is socioculturally negotiated. In American culture, generally, an individual that is overly intoxicated is looked down upon, as behaviors are interpreted to be indicative of inner personality and moral constitution, setting a stage for the victimization of the individual. Drunken actions, whether or not they are remembered by the individual, are remembered in the social group, sometimes affecting social standing. Keiko notes that non-Japanese people, customers or her friends, would use embarrassing stories of each other's times being blacked out as a source of humor and solidarity, much to the chagrin of the victim. However, Keiko observed that Japanese nationals, whether staff, customers, or her friends do not generally discuss others' drunken experiences in such a way[43]. Instead, drunkenness and blacking out are given little meaning and are forgotten. Masa's night of blacking out in the *izakaya* was never mentioned again past that night.

In hearing the stories of Aki, Keiko, and Masa, detailed in the next section, we see a common theme of health and alcohol revolving around the conception of moderation. What exactly is moderation? According to the Center for Disease Control, moderation is one drink per

[43] Several observations from my field notes back this claim.

day for women, and two for men (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2017). A stark warning comes alongside these guidelines for moderation: "no one should begin drinking or drink more based on potential health benefits". The state reifies a standard of alcohol consumption (based on U.S. sizes) based on an ideology of American individualism and biomedical health research 'fact', which is a part of an epistemology they which wish to make be 'known'. This framing rejects the complexities of ethnic, religious, and sociocultural variables in alcohol use, however, and I challenge this notion of moderation as a general, universal fact.

Moderation in alcohol use is a way-of-being that is learned and conditioned through individual experience and bounded through microsocial interaction. For Aki, a middle aged man, married with two children, and living relatively comfortably in Honolulu, has had decades of experience of alcohol use. During this youth and college years in Japan he frequently drank to excess, ranging from blacking out at parties to binge drinking while on shift at 7-Eleven in the long hours of the night. He doesn't drink like he used to, though. Now he enjoys drinking slowly, developing a deep conversation with others about general life, like old friends catching up. The meanings behind drinking change with time, he says, and drinking is healthier for him now that he can enjoy it in moderation. Keiko and Masa, their perspectives, exemplify this temporality in that their experiences, their differential socialization into and embodiment of a relationship to Japan and Hawai‘i, influences the ways in which alcohol is experienced and known. In these experiences, the individual comes to interact with an intoxicated world in many different ways, where behaviors are still regulated through social conditioning, being bounded by bodily experiences, from feeling high with a lack of inhibition to a deep low of catatonia, to vomiting to drug-induced amnesia. Feelings of right and wrong are gleaned through experience, and the subjective sensations of stress relief, of belonging, and healing, are slowly realized through the

conditioning of feeling through repeated entrances into the modified state of consciousness as a part of cultural narratives which contour the ways of 'knowing' about alcohol. The lacunae around alcohol are latently maintained and function to instigate a positive affect.

Knowledge building in the therapeutic narrative rests on more than social and cultural variables; economic interests play another essential role in shaping the use of alcohol. Keiko and Masa's experience of working as the moderators of drinking rituals and customer's subjectivities is embedded in a for-profit business that is struggling to operate in a gentrifying neighborhood that is slowly pushing out small, local businesses. Beer, sake, and the assortment of foods are not free and they are not cheap. The rituals of staff taking shots with customers, or of staff asking for more rounds of alcohol, are a part of a potentially healing narrative, and cover the fact that the exchanges of alcohol are made with money. Offsetting the potential of laughter, sociality, and positive affect by expressly making 'known' the whole bouquet of effects of alcohol ruins the experience of the customer, and by succession, the flow of money into the business. As I discussed in Chapter One, alcohol use in Japan moved away from traditional religious practices, home consumption, and court entertainment to a commodified object in a capitalistic economy. In this way, a path of healing through therapeutic emplotment is accessible by way of money, presupposing participation in the market by way of selling labor. The problems and pains remedied through therapeutic emplotment, then, are problems and pains resulting from a lifestyle weaved into the neoliberal economic order. This strain of knowledge, is, of course, not 'known' in Izakaya Iyashikei. And in this way, unknown to consumers, health is a commodity for purchase for those with the prerequisite social, cultural, and economic capital.

Aki's Story

Aki is a middle aged Japanese business manager working and living in Honolulu with his wife and two children. He sits across from me during our interview, smiling brightly as he describes his childhood in Noami[44], a small, rural town north of Kyoto, Japan. "My father used to invite friends over to our house to eat and drink after a day of working on the fishing boat and rice fields. He was strict, but a good man. That sense of belonging and family is what I remember most fondly. That was what I wanted to do". Later in our talk we turned to drinking culture in Japan. He explains that "drinking is important in Japan. It helps people forge bonds of trust through sharing intimate details of one's life. You reveal yourself and build trust".

I first met Aki during a practice run for the Honolulu Marathon, an annual race that attracts thousands of Japanese tourists. He was running, of course, but mainly present to keep in touch with friends and acquaintances, all of whom are new Japanese diasporees. His youthful appearance and slim stature belie the fact he is nearing his late forties. Despite his busy schedule of managing the Honolulu branch of a multinational Japanese corporation, he found the time to share with me his life story. In this story, he expressed the place of alcohol and *izakaya* in his life. It is this part of the story I wish to share here.

In the Japanese language, there is a word called *nominication*, which is a combination of the verb *nomu* (to drink) and communication. This word expresses communication through drinking (alcohol). Alcohol consumption and intoxication for Aki, as described in our interview, is a way to express one's inner opinion and desire, something not done in other contexts. This expression relates to two important heuristics we may use to further grasp a conceptualization of intoxication and modified consciousness, *honne* and *tatemae*. *Honne* refers to an individual's

[44] To protect the privacy of my interlocutors, names of persons and places are represented by pseudonym.

inner desire, or true wish, while *tatemae* refers to as face or public attitude (in opposition to private thought) (Kondo 1991:31). In conceptualizing Japanese social behavior as oriented towards collectivism, it is inappropriate to express inner thoughts as they are supposed to be suppressed in order to maintain group cohesion. Here I do not generalize these traits as manifest in a homogenous Japanese culture, but find them useful in framing Aki's interpretation of meaning in alcohol use[45]. The state of drunkenness has a different meaning from that known in an American context; drunkenness is a state of being wherein the individual is relatively free of social responsibility, that is, expressing one's inner thoughts is encouraged and not reprimanded[46]. Aki sees a conflict between wanting to express himself, but is unable to in everyday situations (in Japan). Mutual alcohol consumption with friends and family is a ritualistic channel wherein this desire is actualized, creating a positive affect and sense of self among a proximal social group.

As I observed in my work at Izakaya Iyashikei, this sense of self and way of being in the social world is apparent among new Japanese diasporees. This embodied sense of intoxication is not uniform, but variable depending on personal experience and social circumstance. Aki told me how meaning in drinking is different with age. To him, young Japanese people drink with friends and are inexperienced with alcohol so they drink to excess. During college Aki made many friends and had turbulent nights of severe drunkenness, which he is now sure was not good for his overall health. However, as the years pass, alcohol consumption becomes a daily, normal practice. "Age brings wisdom", says Aki. You do not drink with friends past excess, but drink slowly and in moderation, because you, as Aki says, "want to share life with someone else - you

[45] Additionally, this conception of individualism vs. collectivism was expressed by Aki.
[46] This statement was given from Aki but is backed up in anthropological literature. See Nakane (1970), Schell (1997), and Christensen (2012) and for a further discussion.

cannot get past the mask without drinking". I find this embodied notion of moderation to be critical to understanding a dynamic of health and will discuss it later in this chapter.

Aki drinks every day and is in perfect health[47]. He is a Japanese national and as alcohol is important to Japanese people, it is important to him. As influenced by his father's drinking, Aki brings the concept of *nominication* to his own work. Every business meeting with his staff and clients takes place in an *izakaya*. Even after working hour Aki will go, alone, to his favorite *izakaya* to talk to the staff and other regular customers, all of whom are new Japanese diasporees. Building strong social bonds is important not only for business, but more so for individual well-being, and so corporate drinking nights are built into the company's budget. When Aki visits Izakaya Iyashikei, then, this embodied meaning of alcohol is drawn upon as he is placed into interaction with the *izakaya* staff and situated within the structured, ritualistic flow of experience backed by a cultural narrative.

Keiko's Story

> "I get sick easily. I get nauseous easily even when drinking slowly. And it only started recently. Maybe it is age and stress. It is dangerous though - when I start drinking I can't stop."

Keiko is a petite, youthful looking woman in her early thirties, working part time at Izakaya Iyashikei. She is a practicing nurse during the day, still picking up a few shifts at the *izakaya*, an old college job, to make a little extra money. Even on the busiest nights she maintains a calm composure and bright smile, weaving between tables, delivering drinks, taking orders, and making sure people are having a good time. As work slows down, though, she begins

[47] Aki mentioned throughout my fieldwork that his doctor said he had no health issues.

to drink herself, much like the rest of the staff. She offers to buy us all a round of whiskey, and in the small confines of the kitchen we create a circle and drink. As the night goes on, as the alcohol takes effect, I hear Sho tell Keiko, "you should smile more, you don't look very happy".

Keiko moved to Honolulu from Japan with her mother and father when she was four years old, growing up on the Windward side of Hawai'i while attending a private school. Her childhood here was rather difficult as she was the only Japanese immigrant student in her school, causing her to be picked on and teased. She joked with me that she is a 'FOB', a derogatory word meaning 'fresh off the boat'. Despite her dysfunctional family, with a father who drank away their entire life savings, Keiko managed to earn her way through college, eventually finishing with a degree in nursing. Throughout her early life, though, she worked at a few different Japanese restaurants and drinking places, finally ending up at Izakaya Iyashikei[48]. In this section I share Keiko's story of how alcohol intersects with her life and the meanings it has.

Keiko, as a server, is an actor in the place-making rituals and processes that bring Japanese nationals into the cultural narrative of intoxication, sociality, and affect that mediates health. The staff at Izakaya Iyashikei participate in the employment process by actively drinking with the customers, particularly Japanese nationals. Most of the time the customers will buy the staff a round of shots or drinks. Modifying the consciousness is not bounded to just the Japanese national customers, but a performance in which the staff and customers reach drunkenness together. In our interview Keiko said that "drinking alcohol is a part of the job", and that the servers "need to get the customers to buy them alcohol"[49]. Every night Keiko works she drinks past mild inebriation, but the situation and experience is different from that of the Japanese

[48] It is interesting to note that Keiko learned most of her Japanese through working at Japanese restaurants, bars, and pubs.
[49] I am not sure why, but this 'requirement' was never explained or made known to me.

national customer. The healing effects of the alcohol ritual, as I described earlier, are not shared by Keiko. In fact, she dislikes Japanese national customers, as in her experience, they are not friendly and may be very rude. She much prefers the smaller group of area locals[50], with whom she finds it easier to communicate and relate with. In this feeling, we again see that there are stark differences in drunken behavior between Japanese nationals and others. Topics of everyday life will come up, naturally, ranging from personal life and work stresses, and while Japanese nationals will do the same, they delve into much more intimate topics, such as financial advice, joke about sex and risqué subjects, and exchange advice about deep personal issues. It is in this deep sharing that the social group acts as a buffer to mental health and well-being, alleviating the stresses of daily life in a foreign place. For Keiko, however she facilitates this process, does not receive the same experience. Her wish is that "Japanese nationals would adopt more local culture".

> "I don't think drinking every day is healthy, it must be done in moderation. Although it depends on your lifestyle. Problems with drinking reflect problems in your (social) relationships" - Keiko

Keiko's personal experience with alcohol is not like that of Aki. She did not grow up seeing alcohol used in a positive manner and did not experience any distinct ways of drinking culture as performed in *izakaya* and other drinking establishments in Japan. She understands the structuring of drink and food, but the embodied meanings it holds for others is missing. In a sense she is an outsider to the shared meanings of Izakaya Iyashikei. When I asked her about *nominication* she was unfamiliar with the concept, yet upon explanation she immediately recognized the change in behavior once intoxicated. She said, "They all do that after several

[50] Again, I use the term 'local' here as interpreted by Keiko. She refers to non-Japanese nationals who live in Hawai'i and understand the local culture.

drinks! They talk more and discuss how they feel. Especially Sho! Before a drink he barely talks".

Keiko's early experiences with alcohol were not in Japan yet she was still re-socialized into the hybridized cultural space of Izakaya Iyashikei. In the frame of therapeutic emplotment, Keiko moderates customer placement into the narrative and places herself within the same narrative. In Keiko's case, however, the cultural narrative of healing and leisure through drinking is inefficacious.

Masa's Story

I arrive at Izakaya Iyashikei as the sun begins to set, walking in through the front door, chimes jingling as I pass through. Yusuke, Sho, Yudai, and Masa are all waking up from their mid-shift nap. They are laying throughout the *izakaya*, using the customer's chairs as makeshift beds. Yudai rubs the brace on his arm, Sho stretches his legs, Yusuke stares off while complaining he needs more sleep, and Masa rubs his temples, soothing a headache. I worked the previous night with them, an extremely busy night where the staff got drunk alongside the customers. Masa was with me in the kitchen, although a regular couple kept pulling him away to drink and chat. It was not even past ten o'clock and he could barely stand from being so drunk, almost falling asleep over his cutting board. Normally he drinks casually in the kitchen near the end of the night, but that night was bad. He said to me, slurring his words and laughing "I have to cut myself off!"

Masa, thirty-two, is one of the full-time employees at Izakaya Iyashikei, being there for over seven years. He is from Japan, moving to Hawai'i when he was around ten. Masa grew up with a working-class background. He attended public schools but never was provided the

financial capital to attend *juku*, or cram school. His childhood in Japan was quite atypical, frequently moving with his father across Japan as he avoided paying debts owed to the yakuza, Japan's underground organized crime ring[51]. He never really knew what his father did for a living, but he did manage to earn a livable wage. Masa's mother, on the other hand, was from Honolulu, meeting his father on a vacation trip. Although Masa spent a majority of his early youth on the move, he did develop friendships, however short, in all the places he lived[52]. To protect his son, his father sent Masa to live with his maternal grandmother in Honolulu. Masa quickly adjusted to this new life, but never had time to excel in school as he had to help his grandmother care for his younger half-siblings, dropping out of high school to work and earn money. After moving through several jobs in the food service and bar industries, he found himself at Izakaya Iyashikei. In this chapter about alcohol and meaning, Masa's story is the last I wish to share as it highlights the complexity of health-making and subject-making processes in a postcolonial space.

Masa, as another actor in the place-making and healing narration process, holds that the *izakaya* is a "place where customers come to relieve stress and relax in a comforting environment - for a long time". Masa thinks the aesthetic sense of *izakaya* is essential - the theme of wood, layout of seats, and presentation of place invokes a sense of "traditional pre-war Japan". For him, the twilight ambiance is intended to create a feeling of comfort, where the shroud of darkness orients the body's perceptions to the immediate surroundings, which includes the group of people one drinks with. Interceding frequently in this experience is the server, who

[51] Masa said that he didn't know of his father's debts until he was about nine. He first learned the truth when he came out from school, finding their apartment completely empty, every single item stolen.
[52] Masa told me how a regular Japanese customer brought her friend, who was visiting, to Izakaya Iyashikei. Masa was sharing a story of pulling a prank during class in middle school when suddenly the friend said "Masa? Masa Yamamoto? We were in the same class!" Masa was in disbelief all night – what are the chances of meeting an old classmate in such an unlikely place?

facilitates the performance and ritual of achieving a modified consciousness in the social context of laughter and intimate ties. In this experience, time is forgotten in the immediacy of consciousness, and so, in an ideal night, conversation, drinking, and sociality goes on for hours. Masa says "if they have fun they will drink more, I will drink more, and that is how we bond and get to know each other. That is *izakaya*". The stress relief, personal advice, and lighthearted, sexualized banter is a part of a therapeutic narrative, as I will discuss next. The staff participate in this narrative, although its therapeutic effect is distinctively nuanced, and may not be mutually shared.

Masa firmly believes that *izakaya*, this sociocultural form of alcohol use, is psychologically healthy but detrimental to the body. To illustrate, let's return to all three people, together, in the pub. In this frame of social life, Aki regularly visits Izakaya Iyashikei to drink and socialize, whereby Keiko tends to him as a server. Masa frequently works in the kitchen or as the bartender, while, in contrast, Keiko rarely performs these tasks. Despite this, regulars and kitchen staff will make time to talk to each other, even in the busiest of hours. In this dynamic situation of Aki, Keiko, and Masa conversing and drinking, there are multiple conceptions of alcohol use and underlying health statuses. Aki and Masa share the view of *izakaya* as sociable, fun, and relaxing. They both share this embodied notion and find drinking with friends, family, and even strangers in the *izakaya* to be healthy. Keiko, while being a Japanese transnational and working alongside Masa (and the rest of the staff) does not share this view.

The important core, as I have mentioned throughout this thesis, are the underlying commercial aspects of *izakaya*. Aki comes to Izakaya Iyashikei to drink and relax. Masa comes to Izakaya Iyashikei to work. The form of drinking is different between the two, where Aki is seated comfortably and Masa is standing, walking, and bending for hours. The nature of the work

is hard on Masa's body, where aches and pains are expressed somatically, and drunkenness is a requirement of earning a wage. And so, while the meanings are shared, there is an important, unstated difference between the effects of alcohol use between customer and staff.

Healing through a Therapeutic Narrative of Drink and Drinking

The experiences of Aki, Keiko, and Masa with alcohol all center on *izakaya* as a locus of activity and negotiation of subjectivity. The performances and interactions between the staff and customers, in a culturally meaningful space, works to mediate health through emplotment in a therapeutic narrative. While intoxicated, the barriers between public face and private feelings dissolves, wherein the individual is placed in a state of marginality with a loss of responsibility. In this state feelings are expressed and validated. This cathartic process is therapeutic. The staff embed themselves in this narrative too, yet the therapeutic effects are differentially experienced, and normalizes to become detrimental to the body. The therapeutic narrative is not a part of an authoritative, established medical system, but that does not prevent it from being a center of health reconciliation. As is well established, expressions of health and illness occur and are mediated first and primarily in the realm of the home (Kleinman 1989:32). Izakaya Iyashikei is a 'home away from home' for many regular Japanese nationals, and so becomes a critical site of health negotiation. This therapeutic narrative establishes and maintains bonds of intimacy and familiarity among Japanese diasporees, with affective power centered on relational ties to experience.

How, then, does it work as a channel of therapy and healing? As I have come to know, life for some new Japanese diasporees is not easy. As I discuss in the introduction, the 18,000 Japanese transnational citizens living on Oahu constitute a small, marginalized, and relatively

invisible community among other ethnic populations in Hawai'i. This community is not homogenous, it is stratified by age, wealth, and social position – all of which are not permanent statuses. Structural barriers, like limited English proficiency and a high cost of living, limit inclusion within larger social networks. As Masa points out, most, if not all, new Japanese immigrants are not alone when they come to Honolulu, but are introduced to the diasporic community through students, coworkers, and friends. An individual, then, is protected from loneliness in an unknown, foreign place. New Japanese immigrants, as has been articulated to me, quickly find a sense of familiarity within Honolulu. The process of place-making, of home-making, is not so arduous a task as exemplified by the first Japanese immigrants, but just a matter of new experiences waiting to happen.

The intimate conversations shared between the staff and customers is a primary means of establishing social belonging and purpose, are important in mitigating stress, validating self-identity and feeling, and potentially reducing feelings of depression, particularly in older Japanese nationals, all without any contentious interests or ideas (Ohnishi et al. 2012). Many regular customers come to Izakaya Iyashikei to spend time drinking and talking with Yusuke, Masa, and Keiko, discussing their daily lives in Honolulu. It is not difficult, then, to conceptualize the interpersonal relationship between regular Japanese customers and staff as representative of a patient and healer. The staff, especially Yusuke, are charismatic and socially adept, confident in their ability to initiate conversation, sell alcohol, and establish friendly ties. In the situation of sharing personal problems, the staff take the role of listener, giving full attention to the speaker and offering sympathy and constructive advice on how to solve a problem. Resolution of personal problems through intoxication and conversation is the channel of healing that the therapeutic narrative stimulates.

Further, in the discourse shared between people of altered consciousness, the personal information and details shared may contain comments and advice on health. Health insurance and finding a good Japanese doctor were common discussion topics among Japanese national customers. I was interested to learn that it is a common-sense assumption among Japanese nationals that Japanese and Japanese-speaking doctors are better than non-Japanese ones. There are many local private practices that cater to Japanese nationals, yet it is still a minority service. And so, the process of finding a good one is a task best accomplished through social support networks. The intimate ties established in the cultural narrative bridge the sharing of health-related knowledges, and this way, the narrative becomes therapeutic.

Therapeutic Landscaping: Izakaya Iyashikei becomes a Place of Healing

The social interactions which constitute processes and negotiations of health and well-being are intimately tied to space, both physical and imaginative. Thus far I have described health and well-being around alcohol through therapeutic emplotment into a cultural narrative involving ritual and shared meaning through consciousness modification and constructions of knowledge and nonknowledge. Now I return to build upon notions of space by including themes of health and healing. In Chapter Two I discussed notions of place, describing the creation of a hybridized culture within the walls of Izakaya Iyashikei. The concept of therapeutic landscape, developed by Wil Gesler, is useful in expressing another thread of the complexity of health. Gesler defines a therapeutic landscape as a "healing process works itself out in places (or situations, locales, settings and milieus)" (Gesler 1992:743). Although this concept has traditionally been used by health geographers, it has been gaining attention by medical anthropologists as they situate subjectivities in networks of space and how the natural and social

environments contribute to health (Winchester & McGrath 2017). Izakaya Iyashikei is a Japanese pub that designed in line with aesthetic styles typical of other *izakaya*, created in order to invoke a sense of traditional history and comforting home. In conceptualizing this *izakaya* as a therapeutic landscape, sociality and space, surveillance and agency, and nature and home are central themes. Health is not a simple binary of good and bad, but a complex ebb and flow of both. And the nature of a therapeutic landscape, then, is not a simple, clear heuristic of healing.

The small confines of Izakaya Iyashikei places bodies in extremely close proximity, nearly back to back, shoulder to shoulder. The spatial layout of the *izakaya* places bodies towards each other, prompting social interaction. We can begin to formulate a therapeutic landscape by looking into this spacial placement of bodies. Drawing from my observations and interactions with Japanese nationals in the *izakaya*, the individual body's field of vision is focused on the other members of their party, enshrouded by darkness. In the height of intoxication, the individual's entire attention is focused on the others in their group, a feeling and experience ideally shared amongst the rest. The start of this landscape is with the talkative, laughing bodies placed around the individual. As the body and mind slide into intoxication, the familiar bodies are still present, and are still within reach. The space between bodies allows members of the immediate group to physically interact with one another. Every sense, in a way, is utilized in the drinking ritual, bringing about a full, deep phenomenological experience. This therapeutic landscape begins with the individual as a part of an immediate social group entering, mutually participating in the drinking ritual, and leaving together. The whole experience, then is deeply interlaced with social interaction with friends, family, and other close social ties.

The therapeutic landscape is a space laden with informal power structures and an undefined spacial capacity for individual agency. The server and front station staff make a

regular appearance among customers in order to take orders, remove empty glassware and drinkware, and attend to other customer's needs. Quite often, though, they engage in conversation with the various groups of customers. Again, in the immediate context of being a customer, the interaction with the server is not overbearing, but rather minimal unless a conversation begins. The fact of the matter, though, is that all the customers are being observed to ensure they are satisfied and happy. Both the server's default space is behind the cash register, facing towards the customer. Similarly, the front station is also faced towards the customers. The cover of darkness negates any sense of being watched, but one of the main tasks of the servers is to observe customer's behavior, anticipating their needs. The presence and observation of the staff is not absolutely defined. In fact, customers are free to move about as they please, in order to use the restroom, step outside to smoke, or head back into the kitchen to talk with the staff. Similarly, the cover of noise and intoxication provides a freedom to express whatever thoughts or ideas come to mind, just like in a comforting space of home. Drawing from the narrative, then, Keiko is always watching the customers, like Aki, to ensure their satisfaction. This unique spatial positioning of bodies and interplay of agency and unknown observation helps create Izakaya Iyashikei as a therapeutic landscape, where individual freedom of action is encouraged, and sly means of observation aid in ensuring all customers, but most particularly Japanese nationals, have an enjoyable, relaxing time.

A final view of Izakaya Iyashikei as a therapeutic landscape is with contextualizing objects arranged in a way that reminds customers that they are in a tropical paradise and at home. Poster depicting bikini-clad women at tropical beaches adorn the walls of the *izakaya*, both in the seating area and bathroom. There are also more general pictures, postcards, and posters of tropical islands, beaches, and Asia-Pacific nature. There is, of course, a discrepancy between an

imagined tropical paradise and day to day life in such a place, but Izakaya Iyashikei, as a hybridized sociocultural space, deploys appropriated cultural tropes of island imagery in order to further create itself as a relaxing, stress-relieving, home away from home for family and friends. If we remember from the Introduction, Japan's marketing industry works tirelessly to promote Hawai'i as a beautiful island vacation, both a close and cheap destination. Izakaya Iyashikei participates in situating its business in a frame of 'being a Japanese business in Honolulu', creating itself as a hybridized space of health negotiation.

In Search of a Feeling Once Felt: Distinguishing between Normal and Abnormal Drinking

> "I worry about Sho. He always drinks alone on his days off. He gets plastered on shochu alone in his apartment. He always comes to work hungover. He looks terrible". - Keiko

Emplotment of Japanese nationals into a therapeutic narrative through consciousness modification is the general pattern of meaning-making in Izakaya Iyashikei. The efficacy of the therapy, though, is not guaranteed. Sociocultural patterns of alcohol use are not always within frames of 'normality'. How, then, given the many influencing variables, does the course of intoxication change to become undesirable and harmful to the encultured body and mind? As I have shown, the psychological effects of alcohol are socioculturally constituted, where the 'total drug effect' is determined by drug attribute, recipient traits, prescriber traits, and the place of consumption, where drugs and drug use are metaphorically and symbolically framed (Helmen 2014:196, Montague 1988, Sherratt 1995:16).

Social situations may change or work in ways to harm senses of health and wellbeing for both Japanese national customers and the staff. Social consumption of alcohol elevates situations of risk, but use is moderated by social networks, providing a safety net for individuals who drink

to excess. The safety is not infallible, though. Health is a commodity with outcomes stratified by social position and gender. The creation of subjects in Izakaya Iyashikei, alongside the internal nature of notions of abuse and addiction, are embedded in structures which enable the concealment of social problems and bodily idioms of distress. The key is understanding how the social and cultural processes create a feeling, a desire, and rationale to keep drinking. Turning to a discussion of abuse and addiction, however, demands a preface of definition and meaning of highly debated concepts (Garriott and Raikhel 2015). Western discourse around substances consumed for 'purposes other than nutrition' has marginalized ethnic and indigenous uses of medicine and other consciousness modifying substances, controlling use and abuse through law and medicine (Sherratt 1995:1-2). Additionally, discourse on addition sees it from singular vantage points, including that of moral defeat, a disease, or as a crime (Garriott and Raikhel 2015:478). I draw on a complicated understanding of addiction, separate from the singular and inappropriate categories of the state and clinic, seeing addiction, and by proxy, abuse, as an "epistemic object and practice", where addiction is conceived and reified through knowledges and social situations (Garriott and Raikhel 2015:486).

Despite the possibilities of diverse information sharing through conversation in Izakaya Iyashikei, I never witnessed or heard of Japanese nationals sharing alcohol-related problems among customers. Masa thinks there may be many alcoholics that come to Izakaya Iyashikei but they are able to keep their problems hidden. Concealing issues, even the ability to be able to, marks a first point in articulating notions of abuse and addiction. Masa doesn't see any abnormality drinking outside of blacking out and vomiting. He drinks often and heavily but is in relatively good health. I attempted to talk about alcoholism and addiction, but the very concepts were unfamiliar to him, restricting our conversation. This perspective is shared among the male

staff, contributing to the marginalization of alcohol abuse. This is not surprising, as in Japanese society, the concept of problematic drinking is largely unknown in everyday discourse and knowledge (Christensen 2013). Regarding more institutional interactions, I heard of one customer who received a DUI after leaving the *izakaya*, but most customers presumably leave and arrive safely at home. Masa pointed out that they, the staff, do not know what happens to people once they leave. Here we see another episteme; the *izakaya*, as a commercial enterprise and not a medical system, does not have legal responsibility for the actions of its drunk customers, again referring to a dominant United States' value system which places behavior in the purview of the individual. If alterations in the social situation alter the total drug effect, though, the desired feelings are not achieved, making the narrative ineffective, and possibly detrimental to the sense of self and body. The layout and structure of public drinking places, as seen in Izakaya Iyashikei, offers the opportunity and encouragement of problematic drinking, concealing expressions of suffering and pain, elevating the risk of injury for people in the immediate space and social network. Singling out individual pathology or psychology, then, seems even more problematic as a cause of adversity.

The therapeutic narrative, in its process of becoming, is not therapeutic for the staff as it is for customers. Drawing from my conversations and interactions with the entire staff, the regular alcohol use and normalized drunkenness, hangover, and bodily pain are symptomatic that the narrative construction, as a part of daily work life, is deleterious to the body, while being indifferently perceived as an expectation of work, especially in the bar industry. An ideology of work duty frames heavy alcohol consumption as normal, yet it is visible that the outcome of such drinking is not pleasurable. In this sense we approach a notion of structural inequality as influencing alcohol abuse, the work expectations of working class Japanese staff serving affluent

Japanese nationals, usually men, in a small business operating in a competitive, fragmented, and local market. But, our concept of addiction is much more nuanced. This way of being is embodied, the proximate, interpretive capacity of a 'problem' is bounded to the culturally constructed knowledges of alcohol and health. Keiko shared with me that she identifies as an alcoholic, and that she used to enjoy drinking at other *izakaya* and *yakitori* restaurants, but now, possibly due to unsatisfying, long work as a nurse and recent breakup, finds that her body doesn't react well to alcohol. She knows the feeling of deep conversation, drunken laughter, and a generally relaxed time at *izakaya*, but now she feels that she is chasing that feeling. And her drinking habits changed. For her, drunkenness is not achieved 'naturally', that is to say through a slow progression of drinking within the group of friends and family, but quickly and rather abruptly through shots of hard liquor, either alone or with others. Although feeling she has a problem, Keiko does not seek help. Instead, she maintains her part time job at Izakaya Iyashikei, an avenue of sociality and easy, free access to alcohol.

Taking this discussion of abuse further, the feeling of headache, hangover, and bodily pain are everyday experiences for the full-time staff, normalized through constant experience and legitimized by the nature of their work, all intertwined within a sociocultural narrative of alcohol and leisure. In order to clarify how we may approach this normalized pain, I draw upon the concept of social suffering. Social suffering frames pain, distress, trauma, adversity, and other negative affect as embodied as a normal part of everyday life and being-in-the-world, moving away from individualized, somatically localized affliction to collective expression of suffering (Kleinman 1980, Briggs and Briggs 2003, 2016, Scheper-Hughes 1996, 2011). Ways of interpreting and expressing pain are inherently subjective, that is, individually felt and subject to larger social actors. These experiences are wrought through social structures of all scope, "such

as the state, international organizations, and the global media" (Das & Kleinman, 2002:2). Masa, even on his infrequent days off, drinks heavily and usually until excess. At work, he often shares comments about the status of his body, ranging from feeling exhausted to sleepy, or describing aches and pains in his body. The staff converse over these topics often, offering ways in which to remedy the pain. When I asked Masa about the general health of the staff, how often they see a doctor, etc., he said that they all see their own Japanese-speaking physicians[53]. They see a doctor every few months for general checkups, and everybody is apparently good health. It is clear, though, in the everyday life that working at Izakaya Iyashikei, from standing, bending, and lifting for over eight hours a day, from drinking alcohol, and dealing with other general work stress, that this means of living is hard on the body. At the end of every shift the staff are exhausted, sometimes drunk, and ready to go home. The expression of this stress is channeled through the body and ensuing conversation about the body. However, there is no linkage between these sensations and the recognition of a problem. Everyday life molds this stress and drunkenness as normal and expected. Where the customers may drink in search of a feeling of belonging and relaxation, the staff drink to relieve the pressures of everyday work stress. In both cases, the underlying commodity purchases and rationalizing discourse perpetuates the cycle.

The different experiences of Aki, Keiko, and Masa help problematize the transmission of knowledge of alcohol and understand notions of abuse and addiction. Aki maintains great health and extols the benefits and Japanese-ness of social alcohol use. His story of increased work stress leading to the onset of problematic drinking illustrates one point: the recognition of a problem through contact with biomedicine. His wife first mentioned his increased drinking, followed by

[53] I was a part of an interesting conversation about choice of doctors. Masa and the rest of the staff will only see an ethnically Japanese medical doctor because of a belief that they provide better care. English speaking doctors, they say, do not care about the patient, only preferring to 'drug them up' and get them out of the office.

comments from his primary doctor. The self-recognition of a problem with drinking was transmitted through a discursive exchange in a clinical setting, wherein Aki's symptoms fell under the gaze of a Western-trained physician who interpreted them as a negative pattern of drinking. Fortunately, Aki earns a high salary from a senior management position, offering him the ability to shuffle work duties and take time off to relieve stress. In any case, the *izakaya* was ancillary to recognizing and resolving a problem with drinking. The therapeutic narrative may stimulate positive mental health among customers, but it may not be effective in treating problems with alcohol on which it so heavily relies.

Keiko's self-admission of alcoholism brings a second point: the knowledge of alcohol use as a disease. Unlike the male staff, Keiko is fluent in English and has spent more time living in Honolulu than the rest. Her connections to non-Japanese friends and education as a nurse most likely distilled this knowledge of alcohol. And through her life, her experiences have led her to recognizing her own drinking in the lens of the disease model. Unlike Aki though, there has yet to be any solution to the problem. Instead, her work encourages alcohol use without the possibility, yet, of resolution. Possibly the most interesting is that she does not share this identity with the staff.

Masa is the only full-time staff member with a working competence in English, and even then, he is unable to read it well as he never finished high school. He does not interact much with English speakers, surrounding himself with Japanese cultural items, from television, video games, to music. The complexity of his endorsement of alcohol's health virtues, somatization of stress and pain, and normalized excessive drinking demonstrate a third point: the stratification of health knowledge based on social position. Compared to Aki and Keiko, Masa is less educated and holds a full time working class job in the service industry. His skillset doesn't allow for

much flexibility in job choice and his chances for advancement are rather low, especially given his language skills. If in the case he comes to understand alcohol use as problematic and in need of change, his limited social resources may prevent an adequate solution. In all cases, it seems that successful health experiences are reserved for the affluent class customers, the majority of whom are men, further showing that health is commodified in the neoliberal economy; it is commodified outside of the realm of biomedicine. Access to this healing is stratified by social position, gender, and cultural capital.

Stepping away from subjective accounts of alcohol use, the criminal justice system and laws pertaining to alcohol use are the most visible and invasive social structures enveloping the micro-culture of Izakaya Iyashikei. While I do not doubt the therapeutic aspects of alcohol use in this *izakaya*, it is important to situate it within the structure of law within the United States. Both Masa and Sho have received DUI's, and over the course of my fieldwork Masa received another one, costing him around $400 in various court fees and payments. In law we witness the ideal character of a citizen as articulated by the state. And we see that harsh penal laws around public intoxication, drunk driving, and aggravated crimes places alcohol consumption as a dangerous and risky practice, where fault is tied to individual's moral and psychological character, masking the complexity of sociocultural factors that influence the consumption, effect, course, and consequence of alcohol use.

We arrive at understanding how the creation of knowledges through embodied experience and the structures of public drinking spaces and law leads to regular alcohol use in a variety of social situations. And how the effects of alcohol are largely made negative by stress in an individual's social relations, offering a powerful counter to popular, hegemonic Western rhetoric on psychopathology and criminalization. As a final analytic I offer a general point to

bring together the ethnographic data: the individual body in a state of intoxication is at a higher risk of drastic, consequential social reaction. The values attached to modified behaviors are socioculturally constituted, wherein behavior is framed as healthy or not. This subjectivity, while tied into the immediate social situation, is reflexively affected by memory and experience. Feelings are reflections of the individual lifeworld, and while intoxicated, these feelings become fuel for heightened affective performance. The channel of this affective performance is enveloped by cultural rules, mediating the general experience of inebriation. Simply, the drinking ritual influences the remembrance of feelings – from joy to pain to whatever else. Concurrently, the talk and interaction with others, affects the individual mood. It all comes together, arising at once and reflexively affecting each other. The drinking rituals and transnational bodies in Izakaya Iyashikei, in this frame, channel an affect of healing. Feelings of anxiety, depression, and general stress are worked into feelings of contentment, control, and happiness. Honolulu moves from a foreign place to become a familiar place that may be called home. The therapeutic narrative is not completely effective, like all medicine, but it does work for many Japanese nationals. However, the healing comes at the cost of the healer's well-being, maintaining a stratified line between the affluent and working classes.

Conclusion

I have attempted to articulate the various, conflicting, and nuanced meanings and expressions of health and healing surrounding alcohol use by Japanese transnationals in Izakaya Iyashikei, as drawn from an organization of social relations. In bringing a voice to this ethnography I began by exploring the different experiences and meanings of my close informants, Aki, Keiko, and Masa. Drawing from this, we understand that the drinking ritual

embeds, by way of consciousness modification, Japanese nationals, both customer and staff, in a therapeutic narrative that offers the possibility of healing through absolving feelings of loneliness, depression, cultivating psychological health through moderation, and dissemination of health-related information. This narrative is construed in part through the spacial arrangement of bodies and sensory experience, creating a therapeutic landscape. Finally, I turned to a discussion of abuse and addiction, careful of utilizing hegemonic categories that remove the social and cultural contexts away from alcohol consumption. This final analysis shows that positive health outcomes are found among the affluent Japanese transnationals, with a locus of access around men, who have the social, cultural, and economic capacity to participate and benefit from the therapeutic process. The working-class staff, on the other hand, ruin their bodies through their work, differentially experiencing health outcomes. The importance in understanding health through alcohol use, though, is through its social and cultural contexts as they converge and conflict, leading to different feelings and states of health. Simple, linear models of abuse and addiction are inadequate in appropriately capturing the multitude of subjectivities and their related influences that emerge from substance use. The expansion of neoliberalism commodifies health practices that reinforce social inequities, transnational migrations of Japanese citizens do not remedy existing inequities. Further, biomedicine continues to encroach on multicultural health practices, reconfiguring them in its own image with the aid of abetting institutions of social policy, criminal justice, and public knowledge.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION: THE TASTE OF HOME

Introduction

In concluding this ethnography, I discuss the precarity of the therapeutic narrative and therapeutic landscape, of alcohol use as way of maintaining health, of drinking as an enduring cultural modality in the Honolulu Japanese diaspora. Izakaya Iyashikei is a dynamic, transitory, and unstable space among others in a contested Mō‘ili‘ili, where development is slowly displacing local businesses, and particularly, the transnational Japanese spaces of healing and harm. The practices of alcohol use are being pushed out of the public sphere. Whether they move into the private sphere, or to areas outside Mō‘ili‘ili, the fact is that the culture of this Japan-town is changing, continuing to lose its Japanese distinctiveness to other multi-ethnic businesses and customers. To demonstrate this, I examine another neighborhood pub called Izakaya Natsukashi its closure, and the future of Izakaya Iyashikei as some people plan to return to their true home, Japan, describing how health, affect, and identity interlace through the loss and potential loss of transnational people and places. Melinda Hinkson (2017), in reviewing the literature of un-making and precariousness in the recent ontological turn in anthropology, offers precarity as “the ontological disembedding of people from distinctively place-based associations” (58). Through this, I show with the loss of a transnational ‘home away from home’, the practice and meaning of alcohol use changes, fragmenting social interaction between Japanese transnationals. Just as many historical and economic processes have led to the current use of alcohol in Honolulu’s *izakaya*, these processes continue, further commodifying substance use, altering social networks, and diminishing cultural nuances. The experience of Izakaya Iyashikei, all that I have shown in this thesis, embodies and is embodied by the taste of home, if only for a fleeting moment in time.

The taste of home is relational, that is, home is the lived connection to an imagined Japan and, tacitly, a connection to identity and health. If the relationship is not maintained, it fades.

A Home No More

In the early 2000's, the dean of the University of Hawai'i, Evan Dobelle, said that he was going to ensure that Mō'ili'ili is developed into a college town. Mō'ili'ili, being just south of Mānoa, is a key space of potential revenue for the University of Hawai'i, it just needs to be gentrified to support a community of college students. There was opposition, however, from local neighborhood associations and the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce, maintaining that Mō'ili'ili is a Japanese neighborhood and any attention needs to be put into revitalizing its historical traditions and image. The University of Hawai'i and Kamehameha Schools, as they have economic interests in the area, have control of the land and the final say. And now, at the time of this writing, a tower crane, sometimes called the state bird of Hawai'i, sits above the skeleton frame of a giant building right in the center of Mō'ili'ili. Hale Mahana is a new, 191 room apartment complex specifically designed for students and faculty at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The complex will be fitted with a 200-slot parking garage and nearly 20,000 square feet of commercial retail space on the ground floor. Hale Mahana is an example of a long trend of development in Mō'ili'ili, pushing out Japanese immigrant owned businesses. During my fieldwork I witnessed the closure of at least six businesses, three of which were managed by Japanese immigrants. Across from the street from Hale Mahana is another office park housing several local businesses, including the local Japanese grocer and a franchise of Coco Curry House, a popular Japanese chain restaurant. Kamehameha Schools owns the land under this building complex, and it too is scheduled for demolition in the next couple years to make room for more urban residential and commercial spaces.

Izakaya Natsukashi was a Japanese-style pub, owned and managed by a Japanese couple, in Mōʻiliʻili, housed in the end of University Square, the complex that was torn down in order clear the way for the construction of Hale Mahana. While I regret never visiting Izakaya Natsukashi as a customer, I frequently walked by it, hearing conversation and laughter. In many ways it was like Izakaya Iyashikei, especially in the building's aesthetic, where on the outside it looks unimposing and forgettable, but the inside was lively, warm, and invocative of *sabi*, a nostalgic quality of a pre-war Japan. Keiko and Aki used to frequent Izakaya Natsukashi, saying that its 'mama-san' was extremely nice, and that the feeling of home she created among her regular customers was incomparable to anything else. Keiko said that the couple came to Oahu from Japan, opening and operating a Japanese lunch spot for about 11 years before starting Izakaya Natsukashi, which was open for around nine years. While it was first and foremost a Japanese *izakaya*, the owners made a strong effort to use local ingredients, a reflection of their transnational identity. After being forced to vacate the building, the couple decided not to reopen their *izakaya* due to their age and lack of money. And so they retired, drifting away into obscurity somewhere in Honolulu. Keiko says she doesn't know anybody who keeps in contact with them as they are not active in the local community anymore.

Izakaya Natsukashi, a place like Izakaya Iyashikei, was caught in a discourse of re-development centered on Mōʻiliʻili, a resource that could serve as a vehicle for revenue for large institutions in a neoliberal market economy. In a push to bring in more students to the University of Hawaiʻi, students who will spend thousands of dollars through tuition and consumer goods, social and cultural minority groups are marginalized and erased from acknowledgment, not in the least the business owners and people who have lived connections to the neighborhood. A result of decisions made under a narrative of progress and development is the closure of a communal

space which contained its own transnational Japanese culture and ways of negotiating health. While it may be common sense that people will find new places to establish a social identity, I focus on the larger processes which marginalize a diasporic Japanese community. Izakaya Natsukashi is now only a fond memory to a small group of people, a memory that will be forgotten in time. The association of drinking, Japanese culture, and good health is threatened under the intersection of many social networks with competing interests.

A Future for a Home

Summer's end saw my return to the University of Hawai'i, marking an end to my fieldwork[54]. I still maintain contact with my interlocutors, however, and take shifts when I am able. About a month into the fall semester of 2017, I spoke to Yusuke and Yudai, who informed me about a new change in their business. To save money and time, a different menu, simplified with a smaller selection of food items, will be used past 11:00PM every night. Masa told me that the *izakaya* doesn't really bring in that much money[55]. While it is only a small change, it is still a change that reflects a need to conserve money with a dwindling customer base. It is a possible beginning of many changes for Izakaya Iyashikei.

Izakaya Iyashikei as a transnational space, located in shifting economic structures, is in a state of precarity. The *izakaya* is a physical place but is form and meaning are socially constructed. The building itself is an object in a landscape of shifting, multiple meanings and structures. The space as a locus of community, health, and risk is bound as one with the physical locality. The entire existence of this segment of life is threatened by the encapsulating changes of

[54] I received Internal Review Board approval to conduct research until May of 2018, however, university obligations took precedent over continued fieldwork once the fall semester began.
[55] Masa joked about the business not being able to afford a fan in the kitchen, which has no air flow and gets extremely hot.

Mō‘ili‘ili. With Hale Mahana, many new, non-Japanese customers may visit Izakaya Iyashikei, significantly affecting its business operations. Health, then, is a vulnerable commodity, whose connection to a market economy obscures its future and availability to Japanese transnationals.

Izakaya Iyashikei, for many, is a place to be. How long will *izakaya* and other Japanese-style drinking places continue to thrive in Honolulu when people migrate and economic landscapes change? How will Japanese transnationals navigate social life when it comes to health and well-being? While Izakaya Iyashikei is a place of social life, it does not force people to stay together indefinitely. Social networks change, splintering and fragmenting groups, unraveling relations and ties.

Aki plans to remain in Honolulu until his children graduate high school and enter college. Then, he says, he may move back to Japan because his wife would like to be close to family. Right now, though, Hawai‘i is his home. He feels a strong debt to the original Japanese immigrants who worked through blood and sweat to make themselves a new home, the structures of which remain today. When I asked about his times going to *izakaya*, he said “if Izakaya Iyashikei closes, I would be sad – maybe I won’t be able to drink anymore! I would lose an important piece of my culture and I don’t know where I would go” Likewise, two of my other interlocutors, both Japanese nationals working in Honolulu for several years have expressed their adamant stance that Honolulu is their home. But one day, when they near the end of their life, they plan to return to their “true home”, Japan. They think it would be difficult though as they regularly visit *izakaya* and wouldn’t want to say goodbye to the staff and their friends.

Masa does not plan to work at Izakaya Iyashikei past the next couple years. The time we spent together serving drinks, making food, and sharing stories and laughter as the orders piled up showed me his passion for bringing people together with drink and food. He dreams of

opening his own restaurant in Honolulu or Tokyo. He told me to follow my priorities and not worry about working at the *izakaya* during the academic year, despite the pressure from the others. Yusuke, Sho, and Yudai plan to return to Japan, probably in the next several years once their work rotations are up. Their connections to life in Honolulu are minimal, and their language capabilities limited. They still plan to work in the *izakaya* industry, however. Keiko, on the other hand, has no intention of returning to Japan, and is content to say in Honolulu for the rest of her life.

The community of Japanese transnational customers who frequent this pub may continue to visit, under new staff, of course, or they may find new places to establish an identity - a new place to call home. We may theorize these places of home to be influenced by an embodied relationship to Japan, whether positive or negative in form, where affect is molded by this relationship through time and space. The experience of Izakaya Iyashikei becomes memory, the ways of negotiating health become embodied, and the immediate situation of drinking, influenced by history, renegotiates form and meaning. The nostalgia of a home in Japan grows to include a nostalgia of a home Hawai‘i.

Conclusion

Honolulu, as it exists now, is a relatively easy place for a Japanese diaspora to exist. The community is in many different places, not bound to a single locale which may be called a home, but, as I have shown, meet and maintain social ties in public spaces like Izakaya Iyashikei, a liminal space on the fringes of a changing Japanese neighborhood. Throughout this ethnography I covered the social organization of Izakaya Iyashikei, including stratification and hierarchy, patterns of behavior, gender, ritual, exchange networks, and notions of health in alcohol use.

Focusing on the complexities of health, I described subjectitvies as oscillating between healing and ruination in a socially and gender stratified therapeutic narrative and landscape. Health is a product bound to a neoliberal market economy, negotiated through a multipart exchange network of gifts and commodities. While alcohol is historically separated from its indigenous religious context, remnants of its culturally sanctioned positive health persist in contemporary drinking practices and are presented as aspects of a unique Japanese drinking culture.

While the *izakaya* may one day close its doors one last time, the creation of spaces that mediate social life and health will never cease, especially by Japanese transnationals, although the utilization of *izakaya*, a vulnerable commodity in a neoliberal market, is uncertain. And as we understand the ways in which substances are used, experienced, and given meaning, we conceptualize a different view on something called a *drug*, something called a *medicine*, and how in different social and cultural contexts they are learned to be consumed and learned to be felt. Understandings and knowledges of health, healing, and abuse become complex and nuanced in this view, becoming problematic when affixed to social situations and framed under hegemonic biomedical structures. The use, effects, and availability of a substance depends on the pharmacological properties, the state of the user, the state of the provider, and the place it is consumed. Alcohol has a physiological effect on the body, however its effects are differentially experienced and learned, resting upon foundations of knowledge and non-knowledge. Social relations, when conducive to a negative affect, heighten the risk of pushing consumption into the realm of "problematic", compounded by hindered social functioning resulting in social recognition by the immediate group. The *izakaya* staff, the givers, or healers, depending on this context, mediate entrance into a ritual of embodied healing, yet are also agents maintaining a capitalist economy, simultaneously ruining their bodies and health in this upkeep. And this entire

string of interaction occurs in a socioculturally constructed space, a gendered space at the mercy of constant capitalistic progress.

Health is not an issue addressed solely in the realm of institutionalized medicine and the home, but in the forms of commodified folkways between them. As globalization continues, and as biomedicine expands, the social and cultural uses of substances are marginalized against hegemonic views of disease, biology, and institutionalized morals. Overall, I have attempted to provide an understanding of substance use and abuse across cultures, the creation of transnational identities, and the conflicting forms of health altering behavior. The key to understanding substance use is in the processes in which subjectivities incorporate and are incorporated by them.

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